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BIOGRAPHY.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE, AND NOTICES OF THE WRITINGS, OF DR. JOHN JAMES GRIESBACH.

[Although this illustrious professor is still among the living, it is presumed that the readers of the Monthly Repository will be sufficiently interested in what relates to him, to admit of a departure from the rule which allots this portion of the work to memoirs of *deceased* authors or eminent persons. It is with his literary rather than his natural life that they are concerned, and of this the principal events are already past.

For the *biographical facts* of the following paper, the author is indebted to *Bayer's Magazin für Prediger*, vol. 3, 1790, from which it is partly translated.]

JOHN JAMES GRIESBACH was born January 4th, 1745, at Buzbach, in Hesse-Darmstadt. His father, the Rev. Conrad Caspar Griesbach, served a church in this place at the time of his son's birth, but removed in a few weeks to his native city, Frankfort on the Main, where he ended his days. The son was sent at a very early age to the Gymnasium of Frankfort, and had also private instructors at home, by whom he was initiated not only into the ancient and modern languages, and those branches of science which were adapted to his years, but into some of the fine arts. He was hence enabled to carry, in his 18th year, to the university of Tübingen, then much resorted to, as having escaped the ravages of the seven years war, a competent knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and some acquaintance with mathematics, natural philosophy, and history. The public lectures of the university in philosophy and philology not being agreeable to his taste, nor suited to the state of his acquirements, he endeavoured to supply their deficiency by the help of private tutors and professors extraordinary; but he diligently attended the theological prælections of Reuss, Cotta, and Sartorius. He studied the ancient system of theology under them with great assiduity, of which, (says his German biographer,) he continued to reap the benefit, after his views on the subject of theology became more enlarged. He was not in danger of misrepresenting the ancient system, and of imputing absurdities to it with which it was not chargeable; and as he did not change his opinions on a sudden, but gradually, with the gradual accession of knowledge and the progressive illumination of the age,

he never fell into the habit of forming his decisions rashly, or maintaining them dogmatically. He learnt, too, from Reuss, on whom he chiefly attended, to separate that which alone is of practical utility in theological discipline, from that which is merely learned speculation.

Having resided two years and a half at Tübingen, he removed to Halle, where a wider horizon at once opened on his view. Semler, to whom theology in Germany owes more of its present state of advancement than to any other man, was at the head of the university, and under him and Nösselt our author pursued his theological studies for the greater part of four years and a half which he spent at Halle. At the end of this time, by the advice of Semler, who had long noticed his talents, he renounced his thoughts of taking orders, and determined to qualify for the station of a professor. With this view, he removed in 1776 to Leipzig, and in prosecution of his design, made it his object, during the first half year, to learn the methods and peculiar characteristics of all the celebrated teachers of the university. The remaining six months of his stay in this city he devoted (with the exception of those hours which he past under the tuition of Reiske) chiefly to the study of the ancient sources of ecclesiastical history, in which Ernesti assisted him with the use of his library and the communication of many valuable directions. In 1767 he returned to Halle, and continued for a year his study of the ancient Christian writers, uniting with it a minute critical investigation of the New Testament. He found time, however, to associate with all the literary men of the university, especially Semler, and to compose two dissertations, (the first two in the subjoined list of his works,) the latter of which he defended for his master's degree.

In the year 1769 he set out upon a series of travels, by which he hoped to accomplish several objects intimately connected with his future destination, and with the peculiar bias of his mind towards sacred criticism. First, To make himself acquainted with the constitution and customs, with the excellencies and defects, of the principal universities of Europe, and with their most celebrated professors. Secondly, To study more closely the characters of different men, and especially of different religious sects. Thirdly, To explore the manuscripts preserved in different libraries, in order to acquire by the frequent perusal of copies of the Greek Testament, that facility and security in the application of the rules of criticism which such a preparation alone can give—to determine, from personal observation, how far the collations already made might be depended on; how far the uncollated manuscripts agreed in character with the collated; how far the critical apparatus, which was already in his possession, was to be employed; and whether the theory of criticism, of which he had drawn the outline, would be sanctioned by experiment, or require to be altered and modified. Wetstein had pursued a similar mode of qualifying himself for the office of a critic, and both he and Griesbach must be greatly in-

debted to it for their acknowledged superiority in this department of theology. Our author's attention was not confined to manuscripts of the New Testament, but, when he found none of this description in a library, he examined copies of the LXX, or of any other Greek authors which it chanced to contain.

He spent the first part of the year 1769 in visiting the principal universities in the north-west and south-west of Germany. He thence past into Holland, and after a short stay there, crossed over into England, and reached London in September of the same year. While here, he visited the British Museum every day. He next proceeded to Oxford, where he spent two months, exploring the treasures of the Bodleian, and made a short excursion to Cambridge. In June, 1770, he left England for France, and occupied himself, during three months, at Paris, in examining the valuable collection in the Royal library, in that of the Abbáye St. Germain, and several others. He particularly examined the well-known Codex rescriptus Ephrem, (C of his catalogue,) and has occasionally corrected Wetstein's account of its readings. Fragments only of it remain, and of the pages which have not perished a great part is illegible. It can only be read in clear weather, and at that part of the day when the light is strongest, namely about noon. The original reading of this manuscript in 1 Tim. iii. 16, has been much disputed. Wetstein represents it as having ΟΣ. Dr. Less, who examined the manuscript after him, controverted his statement; but Griesbach sides with Wetstein, and, in his Symbolæ Criticæ, and the preface to the second volume of his first edition of the Greek Testament, has supported his opinion by collateral authorities. He also collated nearly the whole of Stephens' manuscript η (L), a copy of the gospels, not of very high antiquity, but containing in general a very good text. As he found that Wetstein's extracts from it were both inaccurate and incomplete, he has given his own collation at full length in the Symbolæ Criticæ. It may be supposed that among the manuscripts in the Royal library he would pay particular attention to those which the learned have considered as having been used by R. Stephens: he was convinced that the greater part of them were actually preserved there. This question has since been discussed, for the last time, by Mr. Porson and Mr. Marsh, in the controversy which Archdeacon Travis, unhappily for his own credit, provoked.

On Griesbach's return to Halle, he delivered and published a Dissertation, De Codicibus Evangeliorum Origenianis, which procured him the liberty of delivering prelections in the university. This work contains the first developement of his system of criticism. He almost immediately began to deliver, first exegetical and then critical, lectures on the New Testament. Being appointed in the beginning of the year 1773 professor extraordinary of theology, he added prelections on hermeneutics, on Christian antiquities, and on the history of sects, ancient and modern, in pursuing which he stated and discussed the peculiar tenets of each. The time

which he could redeem from his official engagements, he devoted to his preparations for a new edition of the Greek Testament.

To publish an edition, in which all former editions should be considered as of no authority, and the text be settled with regard to the ancient sources of evidence only, was a step which was likely to excite much opposition and obloquy. Even Bengel, high as he stood in public estimation, could not venture to do it. Griesbach determined, therefore, to proceed with caution, and with this view, began by publishing synoptical tables of the first three Evangelists. Finding that no violent opposition was excited by the freedom with which he treated the received text, he followed it up by publishing the Gospel of John; the reception of which still encouraged him to proceed. He therefore published the remaining part of the New Testament, and reprinted his two former works in one volume, to correspond with it.

No editor, since the time of R. Stephens, had undertaken to settle the text on critical authority alone. Mill had found fault with the vulgar reading in many passages. Wetstein has marked in his margin the omissions, additions, and changes, which he approved: Bengel has denoted the degrees of authority of various readings by the letters α, β, γ, δ, &c. but he admitted nothing into his text which had not been placed there by some previous editor.' In thus abstaining from correcting what they acknowledged to be wrong, these great men must surely have sacrificed their own sense of propriety to the spirit of their times.

To GRIESBACH we owe it that a more accurate text of the sacred books has come into circulation, and begins to be appealed to as the standard in discussions arising out of the language of Scripture. While interpolated clauses and spurious words stand upon the "vantage-ground" of the text, it is in vain to brand them with marks. But once fairly banished from the place which they have usurped, there is very little danger of their restoration*.

Though Griesbach's method of treating the text excited no violent outcry of impiety and heresy, yet there were among his contemporaries some who reviled, and some who ridiculed, his system. There were, indeed, very few who had just notions on the subject of sacred criticism. An opinion almost universally prevailed, that the Greek manuscripts, nay even the oriental versions, had been corrupted from the Latin. Learned men contended blindly for the authority of some one individual copy, which they made their standard. The affinities and genealogy of manuscripts, circumstances so important in estimating the value of their testimony, were unknown, or not taken into the account.

Griesbach's illustrious master, Semler, had been the first to oppose the prejudice against the *Latinizing* manuscripts, though he had been himself strongly infected with it by his study of Wetstein.

* In this view, a cheap edition of Griesbach's text and margin is very much to be wished.

Bengel had thrown out a hint respecting the possibility of reducing manuscripts to different classes, and referring them to a few grand divisions; but he appears to have been deterred from pursuing it, by an apprehension of the ridicule to which he should expose himself. Griesbach was convinced by all that he observed in the course of his critical travels, that these authors were fundamentally right, and, upon what they had advanced, he erected a theory which is now universally received. It will not be foreign from the design of this paper to notice its principal features.

He discovered that, as early as the beginning of the third century, there existed two editions *(recensiones)* of the sacred text. How this diversity arose, history does not inform us, but the distinction itself is clearly marked. One edition, which he calls the Alexandrine, may be found in the quotations of Origen; the other, the Western, in those of Tertullian and Cyprian. From the combination of these two, together with the errors and variations which necessarily arise in a long series of transcriptions, sprung, in succeeding times, a third, the Byzantine. Our present manuscripts exhibit more or less of one or other of these editions; (for they are not to be found unmixed in any individual copy;) and are said to belong to the Alexandrine or Western, according to the proportions which they contain of readings peculiar to these editions.

It is easy to see how the knowledge of these facts should guide the critic. His business is not to strike a balance between the manuscripts, citations, and versions, which favour one or other of the readings of a doubtful passage, and to proclaim that genuine which has the majority.—He must first endeavour to ascertain what was the reading of the Alexandrine and what of the Western edition. The reading which he finds in a copy or copies which he knows to be decidedly of the Alexandrine cast, if it be confirmed by the citations of the fathers who used, and the versions which were made from, that edition, he concludes to have really been extant in it at the time when our researches on this subject must commence, namely, the beginning of the third century. The same course is pursued in ascertaining the genuine reading of the Western edition. It is not impossible that in this classification of manuscripts, only two or three may be found on one side, and all the mass of copies on the other; but if these two or three are *independent* testimonies, they outweigh a hundred, who repeat the reading from each other or from some common authority. Having then ascertained, as well as possible, what was the real reading of each edition, (supposing them to disagree,) the next inquiry of the critic is, which is more worthy of being followed. This must be solely decided by internal evidence. The general rules for the probabilities of the genuineness of readings are known from the writings of Bengel and Werstein. Griesbach adds some to them, derived from what he considers as the peculiar genius of each edition. The Western edition preserves harsh, Hebraizing, and solecistic readings which offended the taste of the lettered

Alexandrines, and for which they have substituted others, more nearly approaching the standard of Greek authors. On the other hand, the Alexandrine is free from those arbitrary corrections, intended to remove difficulties in the interpretation or contradictions in the narrative, which we find in the Western. The testimony of the former, therefore, is suspicious, when given in favour of the more elegant reading—that of the latter, in favour of a reading which promises to relieve us from an embarrassment*.

This is an imperfect sketch of the system of criticism which is now adopted by the most distinguished masters of the science. Our theological readers will do well to seek a more ample and satisfactory statement of it in the various works of Griesbach. The perusal of them will convince those who look on criticism with fear and suspicion, that it proceeds *by rule*—that its rules are logical deductions from facts proved or reasonably presumed—and that nothing is rejected from the text without much better ground than that on which it first acquired its character for genuineness. Those who despise the science as trivial, and its professors as drudges and plodders, will find, that, far from resting in minute researches and toilsome collations, it calls the great faculties of the human mind into varied and extensive exercise.

In the year 1765, our author was invited to become professor in ordinary of theology at Jena, and after some hesitation determined to remove thither. Before he left Halle, he married Juliana Friderica, daughter of Godfrey Schüz, the sister of one of his colleagues, both at Halle and Jena. In the beginning of 1777, he took the degree of doctor of divinity at Jena. His academical prelections treated chiefly of ecclesiastical history, and the exposition of the New Testament, together with those branches of knowledge which are immediately connected with it. Thinking that he perceived too much of the scholastic air in the *doctrinal* lectures of his colleagues, and too little regard to the separation of that which is interesting to every reflecting Christian, from that which belongs solely to the literary furniture of a teacher, he determined to read prelections on *popular doctrinal theology*, and with this view drew up a brief manual, which was at first confined in its circulation to his own pupils, but was afterwards given to the public in an improved form.

We are told, that from the year 1780 his time was very much occupied with the various academical functions which he was called on to discharge, and some of which he retained, from peculiar circumstances, longer than the ordinary period. The detail of them would not interest our readers —we mention the fact in reference to the tardiness with which some of his works have made their appearance.

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* Griesbach observes, that the author of these corrections in the Western edition seems to have anticipated, and endeavoured to obviate, objections to the history of the resurrection which have been started by modern unbelievers only.

land, and had fallen into the hands of the Duke of Grafton, who, judging that the cause of rational religion would be benefited by a more extensive circulation of it than was then practicable, applied to Griesbach for permission to print an edition of it in England. To this the professor replied, that he had no objection to its being reprinted—but at the same time informed the Duke, that he was about to publish a new edition of it, with great improvements, and submitted to him, that to enlarge the number of copies of this edition, would be better than to reprint the old. The Duke acceded to this suggestion, and, when the first volume of the second edition was printed in 1796, 500 copies were struck off on paper transmitted from England, and were sold here, by his Grace's direction, at a reduced price.

The period of twenty years, which had intervened between the publication of the first edition and the first volume of the second, had been fruitful in works on the subject of sacred criticism. The science had been cultivated by learned men with far greater energy and effect than before; and new materials had been made public in the editions of Alter, Matthäi, and Birch. Our author had been assiduous in obtaining, from every source, all that could enrich his collection of various readings or perfect his text. Further observation had enabled him to decide on the true reading of some few passages which he had before left doubtful. His system of diacritic marks is somewhat simplified. The very brief prolegomena which preceded the first edition are greatly expanded, and contain, besides a catalogue of manuscripts, and a key to the abbreviations and marks, a statement and defence of his method of settling the reading, which naturally includes a history of the text and an explanation of his theory of criticism. The new edition is indeed so superior to the old as entirely to supersede the use of it, except as a matter of curiosity.

It was not until the year 1807, when the possessors of the first volume almost despaired of the completion of the work, that the second volume reached England. The delay was occasioned by a combination of unfavourable circumstances, which need not be enumerated, as an account of them may be found in the review department of this work for March last, (M. Repos. vol. ii. p. 151.) Art. *Nov. Test. Græce. Griesbach, v. 2. ed.* 2. We believe that he has been succeeded in the professorship of theology by Paulus, who has since removed to Würzburg; but we are not informed at what time our author's resignation took place, nor whether he still holds *any* academical office. Though his age is only sixty-two, his health appears to have suffered greatly from various causes, and we can hardly expect that he should labour much more in the field which has been so much improved by his exertions, and from which he has reaped an ample harvest of literary reputation.

Among the features of his character which his writings disclose, there is none so deserving of notice as the candour and impartiality with which he has conducted himself, in a situation where men

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Among the features of his character which his writings disclose, there is none so deserving of notice as the candour and impartiality with which he has conducted himself, in a situation where men

of equal or greater learning have forgotten the duties of critics. Although himself, a friend and partizan of orthodox theology, he has never suffered his judgment to be biassed by such opinions in deciding on disputed passages, nor hesitated to avow the sentiments which he was compelled to entertain. On the contrary, the fairness of his proceedings is so manifest, that those who differ most widely from him respecting the interpretation of Scripture, on subjects within his province, appeal to his authority, and only ask to have their tenets tried by the standard which he has framed.

The following list of his works is complete to the year 1790.

Diss. locos theol. ex Leone, M. Pont. Rom. Sistens. 4to. *Halæ*, 1768.

Diss. de fide Historica ex ipsa rerum quæ narrantur, natura judicanda, 4to. *ib.* 1768.

Diss. de Codicibus iv. Evangeliorum Origenianis, 4to. *ib.* 1771.

Libri historici N. Test. Græce, Pars 1, Sistens Synopsin Evangeliorum Matthæi, Marci, & Lucæ, 8vo. *ib.* 1774.

Synopsis Evang. Matth. Marci, & Lucæ, 8vo. *ib.* 1776, is a separate work, not belonging to the edition of the N. T.

Libri historici N. T. Græce. P. 2. Sistens Evang. Joannis & Acta Apost. 8vo. *ib.* 1775.—When the first three evangelists were afterwards printed in their natural order, instead of the Synopsis, John and the Acts were added to them, and the whole had the title,

Novum Test. Græce. Textum ad fidem Codicum, versionum & patrum emendavit, & lectionis varietatem adjecit, J. J. G. vol. 1, 8vo. *Halæ*, 1777.

Novum Test. &c. &c. vol. 2, 8vo. *ib.* 1775.

Progr. de historiæ ecclesiasticæ nostri seculi usibus sapienter accommodatæ utilitate, 8vo. *Jenæ*, 1776.

Programmata, 1 & 2, de vera notione vocabuli, πνευμα, in cap. 8. Ep. ad Rom. 4to. *ib.* 1776-7.

Curæ in historiam textus græci epistolarum Paulinarum. Specimen 1, 4to. *ib.* 1777.

Commentatio in Eph. i. 19, & seq. 4to. *ib.* 1778.

Progr. de potentiore ecclesiæ Rom. principalitate ad locum Irenæi, lib. 3, cap. 3, 4to. *ib.* 1779.

Introduction to the Study of popular doctrinal Theology, in a learned Way. The second and following editions had this title, Introduction to the Study of popular doctrinal Theology, intended especially for future Teachers of Religion. It was translated into Danish, and published at Copenhagen in 1790.

Progr. ad loc. Pauli, 1 Cor. xii. 1—11, 4to, *Jenæ*, 1780.

Progr. de Mundo condito a Deo Patre per Filium, 4to. *ib.* 1781.

Progr. 1 & 2 de λογῳ προφητικῳ βεβαιοτερῳ, 4to, *ib.* 1781-2.

Progr. de fontibus unde Evangelistæ suas de resurrectione Domini narrationes hauserint, 4to, *ib.* 1783.

Progr. de Spiritu Dei quo abluti, sanctificati, & justificati, dicuntur Corinthii, 1 Cor. vi. 11, 4to, *ib.* 1783.

Progr. de nexu inter virtutem & religionem, 4to, *ib.* 1784.

Symbolæ Criticæ ad supplendas & corrigendas variarum N. T. Collectiones. Accedit multorum

N. T. codicum Græc. descriptio & examen. Tom. 1. 8vo. *Halæ*, 1785.

Progr. 1—5. Strictura in locum de theopneustia librorum sacrorum. *Jenæ*, 1784—1788.

Progr. 1 & 2. Marci Evangelium totum e Matthæi & Lucæ commentariis esse decerptum, *ib.* 1789—1790.

Several papers in the Repertory of Biblical and Oriental Literature.

Of his works published since this time, the writer knows only of the second volume of the Symbolæ Criticæ, Commentariolus Criticus, the first and second volumes of the second edition of the New Testament, and a Programma on the History of the Ascension, referred to by Paulus in his Commentary. He has also published the text and principal various readings of his New Testament, in a splendid work, adorned with engravings. The letters are in imitation of the running hand of the manuscripts, exhibiting a beautiful combination of calligraphy with typography.

K.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

A CURIOUS ACCOUNT OF MR. ROBERT WALKER, FORMERLY CURATE OF SEATHWAITE CHAPEL, IN LANCASHIRE; WITH SOME ORIGINAL ANECDOTES OF STERNE: COMMUNICATED BY MR. RUTT.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *Clapton*, Dec. 5, 1807.

It is well observed, in one of the Spectators attributed to Addison, that if the affairs of mankind are regarded by superior beings, "they do not look for great men at the head of armies, or amidst the pomps of a court, but often find them out in shades and solitudes, in the private walks and by-paths of life." Your readers will be introduced to one of these *angelical* heroes, if I may be allowed the expression, by a perusal of the papers which I now wish to preserve in your Repository. They came into my hands at the same time with the letters from Dr. Franklin to George Whatley, Esq. which were published in your first volume*. I cannot ascertain whether the first of *these* letters was also addressed to Mr. Whatley, though it is endorsed in his hand-writing.

From Mr. Ford, relating to the Rev. Mr. Robert Walker, of Seathwaite chapel, in Lancashire.

SIR, *Conistone*, 26th July, 1754.

I was the other day upon a party of pleasure, about five or six miles from

* These interesting letters, *four in number*, will be found in Vol. I. of the *Monthly Repository*, p. 136. 192. and 253. In Vol. I. p. 406, will also be found an "Original Letter of STERNE's," communicated likewise by Mr. Rutt, from Mr. Whatley's papers. EDITOR.

this place, where I met with a very striking object, and of a nature not very common. Going into a clergyman's house, (of whom I had frequently heard, but never had any personal acquaintance with,) I found him sitting at the head of a long square table, such as are commonly used in this country by the lower class of people, dressed in a coarse blue frock, trimmed with black horn buttons, a checked shirt, a leather strap about his neck for a stock, a coarse apron, and a pair of great heavy wooden soled shoes, plated with iron to preserve them, (which we call clogs in these parts,) with a child upon his knee, getting his breakfast. His wife, and the remainder of his family, which consists of nine children, were some of them employed in waiting on each other; the rest in teazing and spinning of wool, at which trade the parson himself is accounted a proficient; and, moreover, when it is made ready for sale, will lug it, by 16 or 32 lb. weight at a time, upon his back, and on foot, seven or eight miles to market, even in the depth of winter. I was not so much surprised at all this as you may possibly be, having heard a good deal of it related before, but I must confess myself astonished at the alacrity and good humour that appeared both in the parson and his wife, and more so at the sense and ingenuity of the parson himself. My curiosity prompted me to make an inquiry into his benefice, with all his temporalities, of which he gave me, I really believe, a very true and just account, which is as follows. His fixed salary (which has of late years been augmented by Queen Ann's Bounty dropping to it) is now betwixt ten and eleven pounds a year. About this time he visits his neighbours, (who are very fond of him,) who present him with a fleece or two of wool each, which gratuities he tells me may amount, in the whole, to the value of three pounds. The remainder of his income and all his temporalities consist in some small matter of cash he had left him as a legacy, I believe; and, what is very surprising, of some which he had spared out of his income, besides maintaining his family, which is now placed out at interest, and which interest, when added to his benefices and the gratuities above-mentioned, will not make the whole 20l. per annum. It amazes me to think how he procures a maintenance for such a family out of so small a matter, and yet he does, to the admiration of all that know him. His industry causes him to be loved by his flock, his honesty to be trusted, his function to be respected by them, and his genius to be admired by every one.

Having lately observed in the papers an extract of a will of Anthony Brucer, Esq. wherein he leaves most part of his effects to clergymen not possessed of 40l. per annum in spirituals and temporals, I think if any could be procured from it for the parson I have been here describing, I dare almost say, that it could not be bestowed upon a more deserving clergyman; and if yourself did but hear and see as much in regard to him as I have done, I am sure you would take the utmost pleasure in serving such a man. As you will have the first information whether any thing will be performed by the trustees for that charity, in pursuance of the will, and when, if you think there is any prospect of getting something for him, and will please to advise thereupon, I will take care to procure such credentials for him as may be requisite, and shall think the favour as done to, Sir, your's,

W. FORD.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Collinson, of Lancaster, to the Rev. Mr. Broughton, of Bartlett's Buildings, [Holborn, London.]

Feb. 4, 1755.

Upon my return hither I wrote to Mr. Walker, of Seathwaite, the poor clergyman you mentioned to me, desiring he would send me a particular account of the value of his curacy, and the number of his family; and from him I have just received the enclosed answer. I also wrote to Mr. Cooperson, a clergyman who lives in the neighbourhood of Mr. W. to let me know Mr. W.'s character, and how he behaved, &c. which he has done in the letter which I here enclose. Mr. Cooperson is a person of great worth and integrity, and acts as one of our surrogates, and is therefore well known to me, so that I can depend upon the truth of his letter. You will, I doubt not, from these papers, be of opinion, that Mr. W. is not unworthy the regard you have been pleased to shew him, and that he deserves encouragement. If I can give you any farther information in this affair, or can be any

way serviceable in paying Mr W. what you are so kind to collect for him, I shall with pleasure observe any directions you shall give; for I know not a more deserving object than he is, though we have numbers of poor clergy in these parts, nor a more charitable office that a person can be employed in.

Letter from Mr. Walker to Mr. Collinson.

SIR, *Jan.* 31, 1755.

Your's of the 16th instant was communicated to me by Mr. Cooperson, and should have returned an immediate answer, but the hand of Providence then lying heavy upon an amiable pledge of conjugal endearments, has since taken from me a promising girl, which the disconsolate mother too pensively laments the loss of; though we have yet eight living, all healthy children, whose names and ages are as follows: Zaccheus, aged almost eighteen; Eliza, sixteen and ten months; Mary, fifteen; Moses, thirteen and three months; Sarah, ten and three months; Mabel, eight and three months; William Tyson, three and eight months; and Ann Esther, one and nine months: besides Ann, who died two years and six months ago, and was then between nine and ten; and Eleanor, who died 25th of this instant January, aged six years and ten months. Zaccheus, the eldest, is now learning the trade of a tanner, and has two years and a half of his apprenticeship to serve. The annual income of my chapel at present, as near as I can compute it, may amount to 17l. ten of which are paid in cash, 5l. from the governors of the bounty of Queen Ann, 2l. from Mr. Penny, of Penny-bridge, out of the annual rents, he being lord of the manor, and 3l. from the several inhabitants of Seathwaite, settled upon their tenements as a rent charge. A house and gardens I value at 4l. yearly, and not worth more. I believe the surplice fees and voluntary contributions, one year with the other, may be worth 3l. value, as the inhabitants are few in number and the fees very low: this last-mentioned article consists chiefly in free-will offerings. I am situated greatly to my satisfaction, with regard to the conduct and behaviour of my auditory, who not only live in a happy ignorance of the follies and vices of the age, but in mutual peace and good-will one with another, and are all seemingly (and I hope really too) sincere Christians, and sound members of the Established Church, not one Dissenter of any denomination being amongst them all. I have got to the value of 40l. for my wife's fortune, but had no real estate or cash of my own, being the youngest of twelve children, born of obscure parents, and though my income has been but small, and my family large, yet by a providential blessing upon our diligent endeavours, the kindness of my friends, and a cheap country to live in, we have always had the true peace of life. By what I have written, (which is a true and exact account to the best of my knowledge,) I hope you will not think your favours to me, out of the late worthy Dr. Stratford's effects, quite misbestowed; for which I must ever gratefully own myself your most obliged humble servant,

ROBERT WALKER,
Curate of Seathwaite.

Mr. Whatley was very naturally interested by the character of this clergyman, and more than twenty years after the dates of these letters, communicated them to his friend, the Rev. D. Watson, Rector of Middleton-Tyas, near Richmond, Yorkshire, who died not many years ago. Mr. Watson, in his reply, dated June 15, 1776, says,

"I thank you for the copies of the curious letters you sent me. I have, since I received them, met with a clergyman who knew the man about thirty years ago, but does not know whether he is living, but says, a son of his is brought up to the church, and in his journey to some bishop, he could not tell which of them, for orders, had lately the misfortune to break his leg. I have no acquaintance in that part of the country, though I am in the same diocese. It is at least eighty miles from hence. The character is an amiable one, and deserves to be handed down to posterity. Blush! ye stalled prebendaries and fat pluralists! how does such a character, when contrasted with any in the higher spheres, shine in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation."

Such is the account which I

am able to offer you of the "Curate of Seathwaite chapel," who might have sat to the poet of "Sweet Auburn" for his "Village Preacher."

Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had chang'd nor wish'd to change his place;
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing-rich with forty pounds a year.

Or, in plain prose, and according to these documents, with little more than half of that annual income. Of the death of this extraordinary man, there is the following notice in the Obituary of the Gentleman's and the Monthly Magazines, for September, 1802.

"In a very advanced age, at Seathwaite, near Ulverstone, the Rev. George [Robert] Walker, upwards of sixty years curate of that chapel. This venerable man continued to discharge the duties of his sacred function till within the last four years, when, his sight failing, his office was supplied by another clergyman. Mr. Walker, upon a small stipend, with great industry and economy, brought up a large family in a very decent manner, giving to one of his sons, since deceased, an academic education, and being contented in his retired situation, without a wish to change it, he was beloved by his family and respected by all who knew him." *Monthly Magazine*, xiv. 189.

In the letter which I have quoted, and another written a few months before, Mr. Watson communicates to Mr. Whatley the following anecdotes of STERNE, with whom they were both well acquainted.

"*Jan.* 10, 1776.

"Shall I tell you what York scandal says? viz. that Sterne, when possessed of preferment of 300l. a year, would not pay 10l. to release his mother out of Ousebridge prison, when poverty was her only fault, and her character so good, that two of her neighbours clubbed to set her at liberty, to gain a livelihood, as she had been accustomed to do, by taking in washing. Yet this was the man whose fine feelings gave the world the story of Le Fevre and the Sentimental Journey. Do you not feel as if something hurt you more than a cut across your finger at reading this? Talking on benevolence, or writing about it, in the most pathetic manner, and doing all the good you can without shew and parade, are very different things."

"*June* 15, 1776.

"I met with a clergyman, from near York, the other day, who called in upon Tristram only two days before his death. He says there was very little change as to his manner and conversation. A lady was in the room, who withdrew to a window. 'Do not go out, Fanny; this is an old friend.'—'I am glad you are so carefully attended.'—'Had you come sooner, instead of three, this lady and the two you met on the stairs, you might have seen thirteen.'—His wife, it seems, died a papist. I do not wonder at it, for when she fetched me from York to Sutton, to read the papers, I thought her a most eccentric woman. As to the man, considered as man, I have nothing to say, but that he could work himself up to the most exquisite feelings without having any real feelings at all; and nothing is more true than the story about his mother. But he is gone, and let his blemishes sleep with him. It hurts one, that the body of so extraordinary a genius should not have been distinguished from common bodies, stolen for the use of the surgeons, till it got to Oxford, when one, who knew him well, cried out, 'Alas! this is poor Sterne.'"

Having now brought together two characters so opposite as the celebrated author of the "Sentimental Journey," the insidious, and therefore the more certain perverter of youth and innocence, and the obscure, but exemplary, "curate of Seathwaite chapel;" I cannot close this letter more suitably than in the words with which Dr. Priestley concludes his "Description of a Chart of Biography." He there observes, as a great moral benefit which he derived from his labour, in compiling the

chart, that "it hath a peculiarly striking and happy effect upon the mind to consider how widely different a tablet of merit would be from a tablet of fame; how many names would be wholly obliterated, and how many new ones, absolutely unknown to the world, would take their places, upon changing the one into the other. And, considering that these tablets will at length be changed, that the tablet of fame will be cancelled, and that of merit, or moral worth, produced, never to be changed more; how much more solicitous should we be, even from a passion for true fame, to have our names written in the tablet of real merit, though as yet concealed from human view, than in the tablet of mere present and perishable renown; having in prospect that time, in which *the righteous* only *shall be had in everlasting remembrance, while the name of the wicked shall rot.*"

Your's,

J. T. RUTT.

ACCOUNT OF A BOOK, ATTRIBUTED TO WILLIAM CORRY, ESQ. ON LIBERTY AND NECESSITY.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *London*, Dec. 22, 1807.

A friend put into my hand lately a volume purchased at the sale of the library of the late Mr. Isaac Reed*, of which, as a curiosity, I send you a brief account.

The volume contains two copies, both printed in London; one in the year 1759, and the other in 1761, of a tract, entitled, "Reflections upon Liberty and Necessity, &c." A motto from Lord Bolingbroke stands on the title page, which has no bookseller's name.

In the first blank leaf is written, I suppose in his own hand-writing, "Isaac Reed, 1795," and, in the same hand, there is a memorandum below, as follows:

"By Willm. Corry, Esq.

"These volumes were never published or publicly sold.

"The author of them put an end to his existence, by means of a pistol, on the 2d of August, 1763, at his house in Argyle-buildings.

"He was a man of some property, but was said to have imprudently married a woman with whom he had cohabited.

"His suicide was a deliberate act. D. H. told me that he had dined, and was about to go to his study, when, being told a pye was about to be brought in, he said he might as well eat some of it. He did so, then went to his study and blew his brains out."

The author professes himself to be a "Necessitarian Deist." He is a disciple of Collins, and vindicates his master against Dr. Clarke. He seems to have considered the doctrine of necessity as essentially incompatible with Christianity. He says, page 3,

* For the Obituary of Mr. Reed, see Monthly Repository, Vol. II. p. 103.—The sale of his library lasted many days. It sold for nearly 4,400l. an extraordinary sum, if it be true, as stated in the Courier newspaper of December 19, 1807, that Mr. Reed's income never, in any period of his life, exceeded 300l. per annum. EDITOR.

"The necessity of human actions is just as good an argument against revelation, as revelation is in favour of free agency." In answer to the objection that necessity makes God the author of sin, he says, p. 19, that he "can neither conceive the possibility of the creature's sinning against its Creator, nor perceive the least difference between permitting and causing with respect to an acknowledged first cause of infinite power and wisdom." He concedes a great deal as to the mischievous consequences of the doctrine of necessity, by his mode of answering this charge against it, which is, that "the situation of human creatures is such, that it is morally impossible that this doctrine should ever be generally received, probably not by one man in a million," and that, with regard to this one man, the speculative belief of it will scarcely be attended by any bad consequences, because it is not likely that he will investigate the subject till he arrives "at a time of life when habits of acting are unchangeably formed, and prejudices of every kind have taken too deep root to be entirely eradicated," p. 23. Still he considers the doctrine of necessity as a great and invaluable discovery. "When satisfactorily proved and clearly assented to, (he says, p. 30,) it appears to me to be the sword which cutteth all knots, the solution of all doubts, and the panacea for every uneasiness of the human mind; I mean that it is productive of these effects, in case a proper use be made of it; whether such use ever is or ever can be made of it, I presume not to determine." It would appear from the whole tract that the author had no idea of a future life. His style is slovenly, his allusions disgustingly coarse, and his jeers at Christianity profane; but there is often a smartness in his arguments. He discovers throughout a contempt of human nature.

I am, Sir,
Your humble servant,
A. B.

CRELLIUS "DE UNO DEO."

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *Sept.* 22, 1807.

I lately picked up on a bookstall a volume in small quarto, with the following title:

"The Two Books of John Crellius Francus, touching One God the Father, wherein many Things also concerning the Nature of the Son of God and the Holy Spirit are discoursed of. Translated out of Latine into English. Printed in *Kosmoburg*, at the Sign of the *Sun-Beams*, in the Year of our Lord MDCLXV."

This, I apprehend, is the version of Crellius "De uno Deo Patre," which Dr. Toulmin mentions as printed at Amsterdam in 1665. (Mem. of Socinus, p. 422.) He probably never met with the book, or he would have mentioned the pleasantry at the bottom of the title-page. It shews the caution with which a work deemed heretical was sent forth when the publisher could only venture to describe himself as a Citizen of the world. Your's,

R.

EULOGIUM ON THE LATE MR. GILBERT WAKEFIELD.

(From Lectures on the Truly Eminent English Poets, by Percival Stockdale, just published, in 2 vols. 8vo.)

It is impossible for my best feelings not to fling aside every paltry caution, (according to their usual ardour,) and pay a short, but sincere tribute to the memory of that excellent man*. His learning was extensive and elegant; and it was modelled and polished by a truly attic taste. The integrity of his heart did honour to the powers of his mind—(how conquerors, and splendid usurpers shrink before him!)—that integrity could not have been corrupted by an offer of the empire of the world! His very faults were glorious: they were the excesses of a mind of unbounded and intrepid generosity; they resulted from a divine enthusiasm for civil and religious freedom; for public and private virtue. I owe this little tribute to his memory, from gratitude as well as from justice. Our sentiments, on some of the most important subjects, were diametrically opposite; yet we entertained for each other the warmest good wishes; the warmest mutual esteem. I add, with regret, that, from our accidental situations and connexions in life, there was no personal intercourse between us; but we interchanged unequivocal and strong testimonies of the inevitable and general unison of our minds, from the prevailing strain of our natures, and of our intellectual pursuits. Let political and ecclesiastical power look down from their artificial heights, and learn Christian toleration and benevolence from two private men, whom a disdain of hypocrisy, and of misprision of truth, doomed to walk in the humble vale of life. Accept, thou amiable and beautiful shade! this ingenuous and respectful offering to thy genius and thy virtues! If thy happy and eternal state admits any sublunary objects to thy view—that a friend bestowed on thy merit that honest eulogy which hireling state-scribblers denied thee, will, in *some* degree, deserve thy approbation. The recollection that I was honoured with the attention and regard of Gilbert Wakefield, will always be propitious to every temper of my mind; it will invigorate my active, it will console my languid hours.

J. M.'S REPLY TO THE CLERGYMAN ON THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

LETTER I.

SIR, *Oct.* 22, 1807.

It is with peculiar pleasure that I recognize in your publication a liberal work open to the investigation of truth. The admission of my Observations on the Clergyman's Remarks, might have been expected from their conge-

* Gilbert Wakefield.

nia! ty with your sentiments, but you have manifested (which does you no small honour) an equal readiness to admit his replies. I shall be thankful to him if I receive any further light from them; and if he should, by sound scriptural arguments, convince me of any errors or mistakes, I will gladly acknowledge them.

The Clergyman animadverts first upon some questions I propose on Isaiah ix. 6, 7, which he says are, "Can the Divine Being be the subject of prophecy? Can it be foretold of the immutable God, that he would change his mode of existence, cease to be what he is, and become an infant born of one of his creatures?" I proceed to ask, "Can it be foretold, that he would be at the disposal of some other being, *a son given?* That he would be advanced to power? And that *then* he would be called, that is, he would really be, The *mighty God*, the *everlasting Father?* And can it be said of him, the *mighty God*, as it is here said, that he shall sit upon the throne of David, his Father?" These questions, except the two first, he thought it most prudent to suppress. What answer does he give to those he has cited? None at all. Interrogations are, not unfrequently, very troublesome things, and where they will not admit of an answer without ruining the cause intended to be supported, the only resource is to misrepresent them. Accordingly, he calls them "*abstract* questions about possibilities; questions which would be strictly proper in the mouth of a *deistical infidel*, but which seem to him to proceed with a very singular grace from that of a *Socinian*." And adds "that he is at a loss to discover how they apply to the question about which we are at issue." My questions are, in their very nature, a positive denial, put in forcible language, of the possibility of any change in the Supreme Being. They arise out of and are supported by the positive declarations of the Bible, that that Being is "Jehovah, who changeth not; The Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." To have answered them in the affirmative would have been little short of blasphemy; it would have been to rob the Supreme Being of all his essential perfections; those perfections which naturally associate themselves with all our conceptions of Deity, and which are perpetually celebrated in the sacred writings. To have answered them in the negative, would have been to have conceded to me all that I contend for. But the Clergyman is at a loss to discover how they apply to the question at issue. The question is, Does the prophecy (Isaiah ix. 6, 7) relate to the Supreme Being or to a man. The subject of that prophecy is, a *child* that was to be *born*, a *son* that was to be *given*. Let the reader compare the interrogations with the prophecy, and then judge whether they are pertinent, or, as he says, "wholly irrelevant." The Clergyman, however, has here shewn a considerable degree of dexterity. When he animadverts upon my questions, he carefully avoids *any* allusion to the prophecy on which they are founded, and, in his remarks on the prophecy, he makes no sort of allusion to the questions.

Having laid such a solid foundation, let us now see what sort of superstructure the Clergyman builds upon it. "We must be guided," he says, "not by what he, (J. M.) may fancy either possible or impossible, but *simply* by what the *Bible says**." Here I am ready to meet him. The question then is, what does the Bible say? To this we have the Clergyman's answer in the following words: "Now, upon reading the Bible, we Trinitarians find it declared, that there is only one God." So do we, Unitarians. So far, then, we are agreed. "We further find," he adds, "that three *different* persons have *each* the names and attributes of the Godhead ascribed to them. And we lastly find, that one of these persons is sometimes said to be God, and equal with God, and sometimes to be man, and inferior to God. But all these *declarations* rest upon the same authority. Hence we feel ourselves obliged to receive them all. This, according to our views of scripture, necessarily produces the doctrine of the unity in trinity, and the humano-divine nature of Christ." Such is the Clergyman's creed, and he tells us it is what the "*Bible says.*" We Unitarians ask, where has the Bible *said* this? He gives no answer. He offers no proof. We say, he has none to offer: if he has, let him produce it. Let us examine this creed a little more particularly. "We find it *declared*, that three *different* persons have each the names and attributes of the Godhead ascribed to them." I will venture to affirm, without fear of refutation, that this Clergyman never has found, or ever will find, such a declaration in the Bible. By three *different* persons, having each the names and attributes of the Godhead ascribed to them, he must, as a trinitarian, mean three divine persons in the Godhead. Now where does the Bible *declare* that there are three such persons? Such a passage cannot be produced. The Divine Being is uniformly spoken of in the scriptures as an individual person. We find there expressly *the person* of God, but never *the persons* of God or in God. Job xiii. 7, 8. Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. They never represent the Holy Spirit as a *person*, much less do they *declare* it to be a *person* in the Godhead†. But these three different persons, it seems, "have each the names and attributes of the *Godhead* ascribed to them." Never was phrase more ambiguous than this. It is as unmeaning as it is unscriptural. We meet with the term *Godhead* three times in the New Testament, but never with the phrase, the *names* of the Godhead. What those can be I have no conception. I have always understood that *names* were appellations given to persons and things, but never to abstract natures. Were I to say, that certain persons had each of them the names of the *manhood* ascribed to them, would it

* Page 106.

† This question is fully discussed in a little piece, entitled "The Impersonality of the Holy Ghost: an humble endeavour to refute the Opinion, that God and his Spirit are two distinct Persons." 2d edit. A piece which has never been attempted to be refuted, and probably never will. [This excellent little Tract is sold by Eaton, 187, High Holborn, price 6d. Ed.]

not be concluded that I was seized with a fit of insanity? but if it was understood, that I meant to prove by it, that those persons were men, would it not appear still more wild and extravagant? If ascribing the peculiar names of God to different persons will prove each of them to be God, the ascribing the names of the *Godhead* to them (if there be any such names) will prove each of them to be the *Godhead*; and, if three different persons are each of them *the Godhead*, what will become of the doctrine, that there is only one God, which the Clergyman professes to believe? That doctrine proves very troublesome to trinitarians; it seems often to stand in their way, and, upon their principles, is inexplicable. Hence we find the Clergyman (page 412) first professing to believe it, then flatly denying it, and then representing it as something very mysterious which he cannot comprehend. But further, "these three different persons," we are told, "are *declared in the Bible*, to have the attributes of the Godhead ascribed to them." This is also said without either explanation or proof. The attributes of the Godhead must necessarily be self-existence, eternity, immutability, independence, &c. So far, then, are these three different persons from possessing those attributes that one of them expressly represents himself as a derived, dependant Being*. Now a derived, dependant Being cannot possibly possess any underived attributes, such as all the attributes of the Godhead are.—"Lastly we find," says the Clergyman, "that it is *declared in the Bible*, that one of these persons is sometimes said to be God and equal with God, and sometimes to be man and inferior to God." Where this is declared in the Bible I am at a loss to conjecture. The Clergyman offers no proof. He is speaking of persons *in the Godhead*, who have each of them the names and attributes of it ascribed to them, and are each of them equally God. How one of these divine persons can be at the same time both God and equal with God, and man and inferior to God, is to me an inconceivable mystery. He should have explained it, or at least have told us where it is expressly *declared* in the scriptures. The only account he gives of it is, that *this*, (of which he has offered no proof,) according to his views of scripture, *necessarily produces the doctrine of the humano-divine nature of Christ*. Now if these three different persons be equally God, or if they be the one God, will it not follow that they must be of the same nature? If then the nature of one of them be *humano-divine*, must not that of the other two also be humano-divine? Will it not also follow, that what is affirmed of one of them, on the score of his being possessed of such a nature, may with equal truth and propriety be also affirmed of the other two; that is, that they are each of them God and equal with God, and man and inferior to God? But if they are of different natures; if that of the one be humano-divine, and not that of the other two; then they are not each of them *equally* God, much less the same God.

* John v. 26. vi. 57.

The Clergyman proceeds (page 407) to animadvert on what I have advanced on the passages produced by him to prove the divinity of Christ. The first of these is Micah v. 2. I observed on this prophecy that, in it, "the whole description is that of a proper man, like other men, who was to be born of the tribe of Judah, and advanced to the throne of Israel," and I adduced some arguments to prove that the subject of the prophecy could not be any more than a man. This he has passed over without the least notice. On the latter clause of the verse, he says, "the obvious meaning of the passage seems to me to be that which is given by Mr. Lowth. The words do naturally import *an original*, distinct from the birth of Christ, mentioned in the foregoing sentence, which is here declared to be from *all eternity*. For so the words *Mikkedem* (translated here *from of old*, but rendered *from everlasting*, Habak. i. 12,) and *mime Olam*, from the days of eternity, do plainly signify." But although Mr. Lowth says "It imports an *original from all eternity*," he immediately contradicts that sense of the words by adding, (as before cited by me and unnoticed by the Clergyman,) "if we expound it with the Chaldee paraphrast, *whose name was foretold of old*, the expression contains a plain description of the Messias." That the word *Mikkedem* ever means *eternity* no where appears. Whoever compares Habak. i. 12, with Psa. lv. 19, will see that it might, with equal propriety, have been rendered *from of old*. The word is the same in both. That *kedem* is rightly rendered *of old*, will appear from the meaning of the word, and from the numerous passages where it is so rendered*. It imports *precedency*, *priority*, or *antiquity*; it is rendered *formerly*, *to come before*, *former estate*, and frequently, *the east*. As to the other word, *olam*, the Clergyman himself admits in the next page, that it does not necessarily convey the idea of *eternity*†. Neither of the words, therefore, nor both of them together, necessarily convey the idea of *eternity*. The incongruity of uniting *days* with *eternity*, probably induced the translators to leave the word *mime* untranslated. The true rendering of the passage I conceive to be, *whose goings forth*, (or, according to the Chaldee paraphrast, *whose name has been foretold,*) *from of old, from ancient days*. Upon the Clergyman's sense of this passage, I put some questions which I observe, "upon that hypothesis are impossible to be answered." These he has also passed over without the least notice. "In short," says he, "the passage, when *untortured* by Socinian criticism, sets forth what divines have termed the *eternal generation* of the son." It is a little singular that a modern clergyman should revive a tenet which has been so long and so justly exploded. That it has any foundation in scripture cannot be pretended. If by eternal generation be meant that the first

* See Psa. xliv. 1. lv. 19. lxviii. 33. lxxiv. 2. 12. lxxvii. 5. 11. lxxviii. 2. cxix. 152. Neh. xii. 46.

† The word *eternity* occurs *once* in the English Bible, Isa. lvii. 15, and three times as a marginal reading.

person in the trinity has been from eternity, and will be to eternity, generating the second person, will it not follow, that the son never had, or ever will have any real, distinct, personal existence? If by it be meant that the son, the second person, was *begotten* and *brought forth* from eternity, then that *begetting* and *bringing forth* must be either by a necessity of nature, or by an act of the divine will. If by a necessity of nature, then the divine nature, which is immutable, must produce divine persons in the Godhead *ad infinitum*. If by a voluntary act, then the second person cannot be co-existent and co equal with the first, but derived from him and dependent upon him. It would be a laborious task to point out all the absurdities involved in this doctrine. I would only ask, can the words *goings forth*, in the passage under consideration, mean *generation?* Surely it will require the most violent *torture* to extract such a meaning from them. Let the reader, then, judge to whom the charge of torturing scripture is most applicable, whether to trinitarians or to unitarians. I had said, that "the person mentioned in the prophecy was to come forth to *Jehovah*, and therefore was not Jehovah." "Here," says the Clergyman, "is a curious instance of his begging the question." If the subject of the prophecy was to come forth to Jehovah, to be ruler over Israel, the conclusion that he could not be *that Jehovah* is so self-evident that it will approve itself to the common sense of every man, and is so far from "begging the question," that it completely decides it. But he says, "let him prove that Christ is not Jehovah." It does not lie with me to prove a negative. It is enough for me to deny that he is Jehovah, till some direct evidence be produced to the contrary. Let him prove the positive; he would no doubt have done so, had it been in his power. "J. M." the Clergyman adds, "dogmatically asserts, that the scriptures know no such compound being as the God-man Jesus Christ. Let him prove his assertion." Here I am again called upon to prove a negative. If the scriptures have any where so represented Jesus Christ, why has he not referred to the passages? Where do they contain such phrases as the following: *the divinity of Christ, the humanity of Christ, the God-man, the humano-divine nature, hypostatical union, persons in the trinity, &c. &c. &c.?* All this may be safely called *senseless jargon*, consistently with the highest veneration for the holy scriptures, however it may irritate bigots, into whose creed it essentially enters. But does the Clergyman make any attempt to prove that Jesus Christ is such a compound being? Yes, in the following words; "the very same scriptures that speak of the *man* Jesus Christ, speak likewise of the word being with God, and being God, and that by this word is meant Jesus Christ, J. M. does not deny." What then? Will this prove Jesus Christ to be a compound being, God-man? If it will, it will equally prove Moses, angels, and magistrates, to be so; for the very same scriptures that speak of "the *man* Moses," say also that he was *elohim*, God.

The very same scriptures that call angels "men," call them also *elohim*. Psa. viii. 5, xcvii. 7, comp. Heb. ii. 7, I. 6. Magistrates are men, and yet in the scriptures the divine Being pronounces them to be *elohim*, gods, Psa. lxxxii. 2. 6. 7, and Jesus Christ, having cited those words, emphatically adds, "and the scripture cannot be broken," John x. 35. If then the *man* Jesus Christ being called God, proves him to be a compound being, God and man, the same language applied to the *man Moses*, to angels, and to magistrates, must prove each of them to be God and man, and unless the Clergyman admits this, his argument comes to nothing. The truth is, the term God does not express the nature of any being, but the relation of some beings to others; it simply denotes *dominion*. To express, therefore, the supreme dominion of the Divine Being, he is styled, "*The Most High God, the God of Gods, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ*," &c. In the first of John, he is distinguished by the article, ὁ θεος. "The word was with τον θεον, *the* God," and again, "the same was in the beginning with τον θεον, *the* God," whereas the word is simply said to be "θεος, *a* God."

I am, &c. J. M.

ORIGINAL LETTER FROM A QUAKER TO A JUDGE; ON WEARING THE HAT IN COURTS OF JUSTICE.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR,

It is well known that the society of Christians, called Quakers, object to comply with the usual custom of taking off the hat as a mark of respect to their fellow creatures, and that this noncompliance hath, in former times, often subjected them to many unjustifiable insults and penalties. The more liberal and tolerant spirit of the present age has, indeed, happily occasioned such instances of wanton oppression to be more uncommon. If it has not tacitly sanctioned the custom alluded to, yet it has rendered it less obnoxious; and though a Quaker is generally reminded to take off his hat in our courts of justice, yet as it is well known that he will respectfully decline to obey the order, some attendant or officer of the court is deputed to remove, in a civil, decent manner, this objectionable article of dress. Instances, however, yet occur, in which the stern, harsh behaviour of courts in former times appears to be revived; and in which, too, the illiberal reflections, taunts, and vulgar, mis-timed wit of junior counsel seem to be connived at to a degree rather inconsistent with the solemnity and dignity of courts of justice. Something like an instance of this kind occasioned the following decent and sensible remonstrance, which I hope you will insert in some future number of your truly valuable miscellany.

Your's,

A BEREAN.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,

From the objection that appeared at the late assizes, to the exercise of my discretion in the use of my hat, I thought

I would take the liberty of stating, that we conceive the taking off the hat in the way of duty or worship, is due to God only, "who is jealous of his honour," and are therefore influenced in our conduct by conscientious motives, and do not intend thereby the least disrespect to man, but fear, lest by our compliance, we should offend against God. I conclude the court was not fully aware of the motive, or it scarcely would have expected, *or required of me*, to take off my hat in compliance with the general custom. And the other mode of taking my hat, or any other part of my property by immediate force, does not seem congenial with the spirit or letter of our laws, and therefore it may seem extraordinary it should be countenanced by a court of justice.

I believe there is no law, human or divine, which directs that we must take off our hats on any occasion, except in prayer, &c.* and even if there is, should not the offender be treated in a lawful manner? I think it is a dangerous precedent for courts of judicature to sanction, by their own example, that which is unlawful; especially if accompanied with an attempt to restrain the conscience—My attendance in the court was not from curiosity, but in consequence of a *subpœna* which obliged me to attend, or I should not have troubled the court with my presence.

I have felt a desire respectfully to state my sentiments and also these remarks for thy consideration, or for any others to whom thou mayest please to communicate them. From

Thy assured Friend,

C.

THE IMPORTANCE AND MEANS OF PROMOTING GENUINE CHRISTIANITY.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *Sept.* 2, 1807.

Believing that Unitarianism is only another name for pure unadulterated Christianity, I rejoice in its gradual spread, and in particular that steps have been taken of late to introduce the Unitarian doctrine among the lower classes of society. It seems the most likely method, not only to correct their errors in judgment, but to govern their enthusiasm, and remove that bigotry and uncharitableness which is so often found among illiterate christians. To promote the knowledge and worship of the one and only God, ought to be an object of the first concern with all those who wish to honour his glorious name. We cannot expect to see the genuine fruits of the gospel, in the tempers and lives of men, any further than its simple and genuine doctrines are understood and embraced. A corrupted gospel must lose much of its energy, its influence upon the heart must be greatly weakened, not to say sometimes positively injurious. The shafts of infidelity cannot be effectually resisted, but as Christianity is distinguished from its corruptions. These considerations should rouse the friends of Unitarianism every where to steady, persevering, zealous exertions, in the glorious cause they espouse. That the Unitarian doctrine is on a level with the capacities of the poor and unlearned is most evident, from the simplicity of its nature, and from its being most prominent in the Gospel, as preached by Jesus himself to the poor. That its dissemination among them can be productive of no bad effects is equally plain; for its whole tendency is to holiness; nor is there any danger of its pro-

* 1 Cor. xi. 4.

ducing bigots among the illiterate; for its whole tendency is to liberalize those who imbibe its spirit.

The importance of promoting the genuine truths of Christianity will appear from the consideration of the absurd and shocking import, and the baneful tendency of the corrupt notions which still prevail under the Christian name. That Christianity has been greatly corrupted, and that many of its corruptions still remain unreformed, is but too evident. The doctrine of the divine unity, which is at the foundation of all true religion, both natural and revealed, has been corrupted by what is called the mystery of the trinity, which either leads, in fact, to the notion of three Gods, or leaves the mind in utter confusion, through the retention of words without ideas. The anointed man of Nazareth has been transformed into the self-existent God, and the absurd supposition has been involved, that a being who was God Almighty, was born, suffered and died. A malignant being, who is supposed all but omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, has been introduced, in the spurious systems of Christianity, as the rival of the Most High, every where counteracting his designs, and conducting a systematic opposition to his supreme will. The nature of man has been traduced, the Creator libelled, and the foundation of morality undermined, by the notion that man is born altogether depraved and vicious, and consequently utterly incapable of doing the will of God. The character of the Father of mercies, the God of love, has been involved in the darkest shades, by being represented as so wrathful and vindictive, that nothing could appease his anger but the sufferings of an innocent victim, and that he will continue implacable towards millions of his creatures to all eternity. The system of grace, or favour, which Jesus came to reveal, has been changed for the notion of satisfaction for sins and the supposition that God was bought off from the execution of his vengeance, and received an equivalent for the blessings he bestows, whereby the whole economy of redemption is reduced to a kind of bargain between the imaginary persons of the trinity. It has been supposed that men are made sinful, and considered as guilty before they act wrong, and that God esteems them righteous before they begin to act right; that the righteousness of the kingdom of Christ is not real and personal, in the heart and life of the christian, but the righteousness of Christ transferred and imputed to him. While such gross corruptions of Christian truth, so manifestly derogatory to the divine honour, and subversive of morality, continue to be maintained with all the confidence of bigotry, and rancour of uncharitableness, to the scandal of the Christian name, and the encouragement of infidelity; shall those who are blessed with rational views of the gospel, who have imbibed its mild and generous spirit, and who walk in its heavenly light, hold their peace, and refrain their exertions to disabuse mankind, by disseminating the simple and genuine doctrines of Christianity, and exploding the errors and abominations which too long have been suffered to discredit the glorious cause. It is of great importance that men be

led to right views of the gospel, that they may be filled with its benign spirit, and be induced to imitate, in their whole temper and conduct, the great Master of Christians. A regard to the glory of God, the honour of the gospel, the interest of holiness, and the happiness of men, should stimulate the most vigorous exertions in the cause of pure and rational Christianity.

The times in which we live are peculiar. The present may be called an age of inquiry. Many who were the slaves of bigotry and superstition, convinced of the absurdity of what they had been taught to regard as sacred truth, having no one at hand to assist them in their inquiries, have gone from reputed orthodoxy to mere deism. The propagation of Unitarianism seems necessary to stop the progress of infidelity, and prevent its inroads even among the lower class of Christians, who begin to question the truth of the popular systems of religion. A spirit of inquiry manifests itself in many places, numbers are dissatisfied with the opinions they formerly held, and it is desirable the means should be afforded them of attaining a clear knowledge of the pure truth as it is in Jesus.

The writings of a *Priestley*, a *Lindsey*, and several others, who have nobly distinguished themselves by their zeal and unwearied labours in the cause of truth, have already done much, and cannot fail to do more, when brought into more general circulation. Learned Unitarians have laid a solid foundation, and prepared the way for a further reformation among Christians, by their elaborate and critical works: many persons of reading and reflection have been enlightened by their labours; but their laudable efforts to dispel the darkness of error and superstition cannot have the full effect, until their writings, and others composed in a popular style in support of the same just views, be brought into general circulation, and the attention of mankind so far excited as to examine them with candour. The question is, how can such attention be excited? Societies have been established for the circulation of books, this is an important step, and cannot fail of producing good effects; yet still so much prejudice and misconception prevails, especially among the lower class of Christians, that few persons, comparatively, will read books which are denounced as full of the most dangerous doctrines, and multitudes have never heard of the great names mentioned above, except associated with epithets which excite horror. Other measures seem essentially necessary to give effect to what has been already done, and to accelerate the progress of the great work of bringing Christians back to the simplicity and purity of the gospel.

The gospel was first propagated by itinerant preachers. Methodism owes its success and rapid progress, chiefly to the plan of itineracy adopted by its preachers. Why should not Unitarians adopt something of the same plan? This may be done in different ways. Ministers who have leisure, and can find openings for public preaching in the villages round the towns where they reside, might deliver frequent weekly lectures in as many different places as pos-

sible. The reputed orthodox parties owe much of their success and the increase of their churches to frequent evening lectures and village preaching. A few men of approved character, well instructed in the scriptures, of much candour and liberality, who can endure hard labour and mean accommodation, and who unite prudence with zeal, should be employed to itinerate on a larger scale, to traverse different districts of the kingdom in all directions, and preach in every place where they can collect an audience, and find a convenient room, whether chapel, dwelling house, or barn, for the worship of the one God. It may be objected, that but little good can be done by a single sermon. This is both admitted and denied. It is admitted that a single sermon, if nothing further be attempted, may do but little: yet it may do something, it may awaken inquiry, it may abate prejudice, it may make an impression which will lead to an important train of thought; but it is not proposed to leave the audience with the discourse without doing something further. The preacher should converse freely with some of his audience at their houses, and this will generally be found practicable; he should leave some books with them, he should endeavour to keep up an intercourse with them by letters, and, if they desire it, as soon as convenient, visit them again; and, when a few persons are sufficiently instructed, form them into a society, and encourage them to meet together for the worship of the one God. Where no opportunity of preaching offers, the minister, in travelling, should call on individuals who are favourable to the Unitarian doctrine, strengthen them by conversation, leave books with them to read and lend, and stimulate them to do what they can to enlighten mankind. If but one individual of good sense can be found in a town or village, who is zealous for the truth as it is in Jesus, and who adorns it in his life, he may be regarded as a seed, which if frequently watered and cherished, will produce fruit in the neighbourhood around. Preaching in a popular style, and free affectionate conversation, are eminently calculated to awaken inquiry, to remove prejudice, and to gain the attention of men to those valuable writings which will not fail to enlighten and improve them. It is impossible that ministers should engage in the execution of such a plan as is here recommended without much labour and expense, and without being assisted by their opulent brethren, it will be impossible for them to proceed in it to any great extent. The Unitarian Fund Society seems well calculated to support those who may engage in a work so arduous, and to superintend their labours. The Committee of that fund will be careful to employ only such persons as can be relied on for prudence and good conduct, and their superintendence, as the persons they employ must hold themselves accountable to them, will prevent any abuses, or improprieties, which might otherwise take place. It is presumed, that when the plan which the Fund Society aims to promote is fully understood, and its importance duly considered, no backwardness to promote it will be found among those liberal-minded Christians

who are distinguished by the name of Unitarians.

Little societies of Unitarians have been formed of late years in different places; their members are chiefly poor; they cannot at present support ministers among themselves, nor can ministers be found for them: the itinerating plan seems the only practicable one on which assistance can be afforded to such infant societies.

The number of Unitarians in this island is much greater than a cursory observer would suppose; they are truly respectable for their piety, learning, liberality, and in their worldly circumstances; nothing seems necessary but for them to make those united exertions in the cause of truth which are quite practicable, in order to a great and important effect being produced. What is here recommended will by no means militate against any other plan of utility, or prevent their exertions in supporting other institutions equally important to the cause of truth and righteousness.

It has been lamented, and is certainly much to be deplored, that some congregations, once respectable, have decayed, and that many of our congregations do not increase. It is highly desirable a remedy should be found for these evils. In some instances, such is the strength of prejudice, and the indifference to truth, which generally prevails, that no great good can be effected at present; but in other cases, the evil may be prevented or cured. If the heads of families would be more constant in their attendance on public worship, and make a point of bringing the whole of their families with them, and maintained the good old practice of family-worship, and of giving religious instruction to their children and servants, this would help to prevent our churches dwindling away. If, at the same time, habits of religious conversation were revived, if private Christians would exert themselves to enlighten their neighbours, friends, and acquaintance, and in a respectable manner endeavoured to excite the attention of others to the labours of the ministers they highly esteem, our congregations would increase. One important step towards the preservation and increase of our congregations is the education of pious and zealous young men for the Christian ministry. The academical institution at York, under the superintendence of a gentleman, eminent for his learning and piety, is peculiarly calculated to form such ministers, as by their learning and respectable character will do honour to Christianity, and are likely to promote the truth, and revive the drooping cause in those places where it declines for want of able and active ministers. The consideration of this should call forth the zealous exertions of the friends of truth and free inquiry in support of that institution.

I remain, very respectfully,

Your's,

EUSEBIUS.

MR. CAPPE'S DISSERTATIONS.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *Nov.* 24, 1807.

I join issue perfectly with your correspondent, Quæro, (M. Repos. Vol. II. 484) in the surprise expressed by him that the Dissertations of the late Rev. Newcome Cappe, published by his widow, should have obtained so little attention. I am not qualified, Mr. Editor, by a critical knowledge of the original languages, any more than this writer, to appreciate duly the justness of such of Mr. Cappe's remarks as are the result, or as may fairly be deduced, from any supposed emendations in our common version, but, if I mistake not, the Dissertation particularly referred to by him, namely, that on the meaning of the terms—kingdom of God—of heaven—and of Christ, may be nearly, if not quite as completely, understood by the unlettered man, of plain understanding, who will read it with an unprejudiced mind, accompanying the author in his patient research into the real import of the numerous passages there referred to, and which mutually explain each other, as the most profound scholar. That it should not have been read with attention surprises me more, because I think that an accurate knowledge of this peculiar phraseology, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," used constantly by the Baptist, by Christ himself, and afterwards by the Apostles, is essential to the forming just ideas of his divine mission, and because I do not know that any other writer has so clearly and accurately unfolded its meaning. Surely, if there be a subject with which it is important that a Christian should be well acquainted, it is the full import of the language used by his master, respecting the nature of that kingdom which it was the great object of his divine mission to announce.

Now, Sir, if the learned author of this Dissertation be right, and that he is so, appears to my mind with all the force of demonstration, the terms—kingdom of heaven, or reign of heaven—of God—and of Christ—are synonymous, and signify, in their primary acceptation, that dispensation or state of things which was to take place after the ascension of our Lord into heaven; and to constitute at once an illustrious reward for his great sufferings in the cause of truth and virtue; a striking evidence of his being in actual possession of that reward; and at the same time a means of supplying his disciples with an accurate recollection of past events; with the spirit of prophecy, respecting some that were yet future; and with such other miraculous powers, as were essential to the success of their great and important mission.

This kingdom, or reign of Christ, commenced then with the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and terminated with the destruction of the Jewish state and polity by the Roman armies under Titus, when in the striking and magnificent imagery of Eastern hyperbole, Christ is

said to descend from heaven with the sound of a trumpet, with power and great glory, and to separate between the righteous and the wicked.

That this is the true interpretation I am fully convinced, both from the arguments adduced in its support in this ingenious Dissertation, and likewise because it completely explains many difficulties which are not capable of being otherwise satisfactorily accounted for.

In the first place, it gives a precision to the language and predictions of Christ, which we shall look for in vain on any other principle: and, in the second, it removes many formidable objections on the part of unbelievers. That I may not take up too much of your time, Mr. Editor, I shall merely adduce the following instance.

If it be affirmed, by admitting the fact of a delegated power on the part of the first Christians to work miracles, after the ascension of their master, that thereby a door is opened to all the absurdities of the popish legends, the answer is obvious and decisive:—that this power was to be withdrawn when the visible kingdom on earth, with which Christ was invested, for a limited time, and for an especial purpose, should finally terminate. From the memorable day of pentecost, to the total destruction of Jerusalem and the complete overthrow of the Jewish polity, the reign of Christ was to be outward and visible, and to be administered by the vicegerency of the Apostles and their early converts; and that the prediction was fulfilled, we have complete evidence at this day by the astonishing effects which we know were produced, and which, if the fact were not admitted, would be wholly unaccountable. After this period, the gospel, (or the good news of a future everlasting life,) so important to illuminate the dark regions of futurity, and to supply additional and stronger motives to the dictates of reason in favour of virtue, was to be left to take its own course: Christ indeed was still to reign and to govern by the influence of his example, his death, resurrection, and ascension, but the power was to be invisible, and to be exercised only on the hearts of men; and such in both instances has been the event.

A Serious Inquirer after Scripture Truth.

THE LAYMAN'S EXAMINATION OF THE REV. F. STONE'S STATEMENT OF HIS CASE.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

Sir, *London*, Jan. 8, 1808.

An old proverb in our language tells us, that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander; and whatever applies to a parish priest, on the article of teaching, is equally binding in the case of a bishop. A clergyman of Durham, styling himself Cler. Dunelm, has in your last, (vol. II. p. 634.) brought forth strong arguments against Mr. Stone; and I am not in the least surprised at them. Mr. Cler. Dunelm was

educated at Oxford, where he was obliged to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles on his admission into the University; and he of course, having had his mind twisted and contaminated by that impious ceremony, has no idea of the solemn scriptural engagement, which a clegyman enters into with his bishop and the church at ordination. Mr. Cler. Dunelm makes the articles the first point; the scriptures the second. Now I was educated at the University of Cambridge, where we do not subscribe these articles, till we take our master's degree. Of course many of us leave the University, without suffering this mental prostitution; and for my own part, in common with numbers of Cambridge men, I look upon the scriptures in the first place, upon the articles only in the second place; and as infinitely beneath them in dignity and importance: and in this I am justified by the constitution of the Church of England and by the articles themselves.

I am not in the least surprised, that Mr. Stone's case is far from being understood. Few persons will give themselves any trouble about it, and particularly those in the higher classes. Many, I have conversed with, say, that it is evident Mr. Stone is wrong, for he has not preached according to the articles; and they do not examine, whether he has preached according to the scriptures. They are, they say, Christians by act of parliament; and this, Mr. Editor, is, I believe, except the Methodists, the most numerous sect in this country, and I have little scruple in my own mind, from what I have seen of the writings of Mr. Cler. Dunelm, of setting him down in this number.

But, Sir, for the understanding of this case, the nature of subscription and ordination ought to be understood. Subscription takes place in a private room, in the presence of the bishop only and his secretary. The subscriber, by fixing his name down in writing, testifies only, that at that time, he assents to the Thirty-nine Articles: he does not say, that he believes them, much less does he declare, that he always will believe them. At ordination it is a different case. He is called upon in the most solemn manner, by the bishop, to declare, that he will make the scriptures the rule of his preaching, and that he will teach by them, and by them only. The superiority of the obligation in this case cannot, it appears to me, be doubted. Every clergyman of the Church of England, is bound by his solemn vow to preach and teach scriptural truth, and to preach it in sincerity. He is not in the least bound by his subscription to the articles, where he thinks scriptural truth to interfere: for this subscription was a requisite only to ordination or the acceptance of a living. A clergyman, like Mr. Stone, might very conscientiously have subscribed the articles forty or fifty years ago, but his belief of them at that time is not to alter his conduct now: he is bound by the most solemn vow, that can be made, to teach only by the scriptures; his own mind is in this case the only judge upon earth; he has made a vow in the sight of God, and, if he breaks that vow, he is amenable to God alone. That the Church of England is

not left without a security, in case his preaching should be obnoxious to the rulers of the church, I will shew at another opportunity; but on this point it is evident that Mr. Cler. Dunelm has been led away by common-place talk, without any examination of the subject.

But let us view the case in another light. Mr. Stone contradicts the Articles of the Church. Is he singular in this case? An aged clergyman, after fifty years study of the scripture, called upon by the archdeacon to preach, speaks what he believes to be the truth. The time and place of audience were most suitable to such a discourse. Let us compare his case with that of the present Bishop of Lincoln. His lordship, not called upon, publishes a book, which has gone through as many editions as Mr. Stone's sermon, and in that book impugns the articles of the Church of England. To prove this, I will give you the words of the articles, and the words of the bishop.

The articles say, "There are three creeds, which ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy scripture." Now one of these creeds says, "This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved. Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary, that he hold the catholic faith; which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Now what does the Bishop of Lincoln say of these points? Consult the second volume of his Elements of Theology, page 224, and you find him contradicting in point blank language, the church, or, in the words of Mr. Stone's citation, impugning the articles: for the Bishop of Lincoln says, "We are not to consider all, who differ from us, as unworthy of, or excluded from the favour of God."

The Bishop and the church of England, are as completely at issue, as Mr. Stone and the church of England. One impugns one article, and the other another article. But to make the point still clearer, the Bishop of Lincoln asserts in page 223, that "it is utterly repugnant to the attributes of God, and it cannot be reconciled to our ideas of common justice, that a person should be consigned to eternal punishment, because he did not believe certain articles of faith, which were never proposed to him, or of the truth of which he was not qualified to judge." In another place, page 222, the Bishop of Lincoln says, "I cannot but conceive it to be both unnecessary and presumptuous to say, that except every one do keep them whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."

Now, Sir, I do not blame the Bishop of Lincoln for any one of these assertions. On the contrary, I believe him to be perfectly in the right, and the church to be perfectly in the wrong. But according to Mr. Cler. Dunelm—"As it is, the bishop of Lincoln hath forfeited his trust, he hath violated his solemn pledge, and is, therefore, as justly proceeded against, as the king might proceed against any military officer,

who had forfeited his trust." Againt this assertion I enter my protest, I do assert, that neither the bishop of Lincoln nor Mr. Stone, though both impugners of the articles, have violated their trust, or done any thing more than what they solemnly covenanted to do, when in the sight of God and the church they vowed to teach and preach according to the scriptures.

It is of importance that this question should be settled. Mr. Stone and the Bishop of Lincoln have impugned the articles; the one in a sermon, the other in a publication. But has not Mr. Cler. Dunelm ever impugned the articles? I never read or heard any of his sermons: but I have not the least doubt that he has impugned them over and over again. My reason for this opinion is, that I do not believe that any two clergymen in this kingdom agree in their exposition of the articles; and if Mr. Cler. Dunelm differs in any one point he hath as much forfeited his trust, as much violated his solemn pledge as Mr. Stone. I put it solemnly to the conscience of Mr. Cler. Dunelm, whether he is not as guilty as Mr. Stone; and in the day when the secrets of all hearts are to be revealed, an appeal to the authority of the thirty-nine articles, will be treated with the contempt it deserves.

A LAYMAN.

PETITPIERRE ON THE DIVINE GOODNESS.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR,

Permit me, through the medium of your excellent publication, to call the attention of your readers to a book which is not sufficiently known in the religious world. It is entitled "Thoughts on the divine goodness relative to the government of moral agents, particularly displayed in future rewards and punishments. Translated from the French of Petitpierre." It abounds with such excellent remarks on the divine goodness, that I am persuaded not any person who will read it with attention but will be sorry he had not known it sooner.

I am, Sir, yours,

OMICRON.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE "INWARD LIGHT" OF THE QUAKERS.

The Monthly Reviewers in their remarks on a work lately published by the Rev. Mr. Clarkson, entitled "A Portraiture of Quakerism," having briefly opposed that peculiar opinion of the Quakers which asserts that the "inward light" or "divine spirit" of which every man possesses a portion, is superior to the scriptures, inasmuch as the one is primary and the other merely secondary; has induced one of their friends under the signature of "Philo" to transmit to the reviewers a paper tending to eluci-

date the subject, and which was inserted in the "Correspondence" for the month of July. An opinion so singular and extraordinary impressed the mind of the present writer, who communicated to those gentlemen a few ideas which suggested themselves in reply to the logical arguments of Philo, and although the nature of their publication did not admit a prolongation of the argument, through that channel, yet the favourable opinion they were pleased to express of that communication, together with the magnitude of the subject to the Christian world in general, has induced him in as concise a manner as possible, to lay before the readers of the Monthly Repository those arguments which appear to militate against the adoption of such a doctrine.

The belief of the Quakers in the superiority of the "inward light" or "divine spirit" over the scriptures, which it is the aim of Philo to elucidate and inculcate, is thus expressed by Barclay. "The spirit, and not the scriptures, is the foundation and ground of all truth and knowledge, and the primary rule of faith and manners." To place this matter in a clearer point of view, Philo has thought fit to bring forward the operation of reason on those laws by which mankind are governed and regulated as analogous to the "inward light" or "divine spirit," and the scriptures; and in so doing he has perhaps given as acute an illustration of that peculiar opinion as the nature of the case will admit: he should however recollect that as the laws frequently undergo an alteration to suit particular periods and circumstances, and some of them from a lapse of time become quite obsolete; this comparison goes in these instances to destroy the infallibility and permanency of the scriptures, by making the former subject to a revision by "human reason," and the latter to a revision by the "inward light," or "divine spirit;" neither does the analogy hold good with respect to the *doctrinal* parts of Christianity, for though it is true that "the laws" have their origin in "human reason," and by human reason are comprehended and applied, yet it surely will not be contended by Philo, nor is it to be found in Barclay that the *doctrinal* parts of Christianity exist inherently in what the Quakers call the "inward light," independent of the scriptures and the information therein contained.

The fairest way of investigating the subject now under discussion, is to consider the effect which a general assent to this opinion would most probably produce among the various sects professing Christianity; because it not unfrequently happens that certain principles may be advanced and acted upon by a limited number of individuals whose habits and modes of thinking are adapted thereto, whereas if those principles were brought forward in order to be acted upon generally and universally, they would, from the very nature of them, in all probability, fall to the ground. The Christian world may perhaps with propriety be comprized under two distinct classes: the one, and by far the most numerous, are those who from early education, (and even among the Quakers this sort of hereditary faith is not unfrequently found to exist,) from serious investigation,

and other circumstances, are attached to, and prejudiced in favour of some particular sect or persuasion; and the other consists of those whose minds are as yet undecided, and who have not so maturely considered the doctrinal parts of Christianity as to become the absolute members of any particular society.

Taking it therefore for granted, consistently with the opinion of Barclay and of Philo, that all mankind possess inherently a portion of this "inward light" or "divine spirit," the effect produced by a general coincidence in this opinion would be that of rivetting each particular sect more firmly in their various tenets, many of which are in direct opposition to each other; because each sectarist supposing himself to be under the influence and teaching of the "divine spirit," and having this superior tribunal to apply to in all cases of difficulty, would be more than ever convinced of the truth of his separate doctrine, and in proportion to his zeal and diligence in searching the scriptures, so would this confidence naturally be. Instead therefore of uniting the various professors of Christianity more closely together, the effect would be diametrically opposite; and to use the words of Barclay, they would "be continually buffetting one another with the scriptures; concerning one verse of which scarce two can be found to agree."

It may likewise be observed, that hitherto the Calvinist and the Arminian have vindicated the truth of their separate doctrines, and combated the errors of each other by arguments drawn solely from the scriptures, but should the existence of an inward and superior light be generally admitted, it must of necessity tend, as before observed, to aggravate rather than to reconcile their difference of opinion, and instead of referring as formerly to the scriptures, the principal question would be, as to which of the controverting parties the greatest share of the "divine spirit" was imparted, and this single point being once ascertained, though in imagination only, all other arguments would naturally fall to the ground.

With regard to that denomination of Christians whose minds are not yet settled respecting the doctrinal parts of scripture, the effect of a belief in the superiority of an "inward light," would in all probability prevent them from investigating those abstruse and contradictory passages of scripture, which appear calculated to harass and perplex, but without which investigation the doctrinal parts of Christianity can never be discovered and arranged so as to form a system, or "a rule" either "of faith," or "of manners." Such persons would not feel themselves under the necessity of believing more than appeared to them to be true, or of embracing opinions not thoroughly understood and comprehended by their "inward light."

Philo must forgive the writer if he should have the presumption to doubt altogether the existence of this "inward light," or "divine spirit," as inherent in the mind of man, and it would be a difficult matter for him to demonstrate clearly, and to distinguish accurately between what he calls the "inward light," and those reasoning faculties which the Supreme

Being has implanted in the human mind on the one hand, and between the "inward light" of the Quakers, and the enthusiasm of the various sectarists on the other: but until this task shall be performed, it is impossible that those who are accustomed to think for themselves on all theological subjects, should be brought to assent to the truth of what appears so very improbable and problematical, and rendered more so from that want of conformity in the religious opinions of mankind, which could not be the case if they were all taught by the same teacher, and that teacher no other than the "divine spirit," whose power and influence on the human mind must of necessity overcome all opposition, and impress upon the heart of every individual one simple and uniform truth.

As, however, this mode of thinking is at present confined solely to the Quakers, it certainly gives them a privilege and advantage beyond every other sect professing Christianity, and those abstruse and difficult passages of scripture which frequently torment and perplex others, give to Philo and his *friends* no sort of uneasiness, because they are Christians upon better terms.

Having thus endeavoured to express those ideas which presented themselves to the mind of the writer during the investigation of the subject, he earnestly hopes that nothing has escaped him which may in the remotest degree have a tendency to reflect on a class of men who are individually an honour to society, and who are, upon that account, respected and esteemed by no one more sincerely than

VERITAS.

Woburn,
Oct. 20th 1807.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

OBSERVATIONS ON JOHN VI. 37. ALL THAT THE FATHER GIVETH ME SHALL COME TO ME.—BY THE LATE REV. W. TURNER, OF WAKEFIELD.

If our blessed Saviour ever affected obscurity in his discourses, it was either when he was encountered by captious and malicious persons, or when he had to deal with stupid, sensual, and inconsiderate people, destitute of any real religious principles or love of goodness. But, when the well-disposed addressed to him sincere inquiries after truth, and that discovery of it which God had sent him to publish to the world, he never failed to explain himself in the most simple and intelligible terms. The scribes, pharisees, and chief priests, attempted often to ensnare him in his discourse, by proposing questions to him, so artfully contrived, that they imagined, whatever answer he should make to them, would afford a pretence, either for accusing him to the Roman governor of sedition against the government, and thereby for getting him put to death as a malefactor, or for exposing him to a popular clamour and

odium, as an enemy to the rights and privileges of the people, or a subverter of the sacred obligations of the law of Moses, and thereby effectually ruin that credit and influence which his doctrines, miracles, and unblemished life, had procured over the generality. In such cases, his usual method was to manifest his own superior wisdom by returning such answers to the questions proposed, as kept perfectly clear of the snare laid for him; and then to silence his adversaries effectually by returning some other question upon them, which they either could not or durst not answer, lest they should have involved themselves in the very dilemma they had intended for him. For examples of this, see 21st and 22d chapters of Matthew, and 20th chapter of Luke.

On the other hand, a great part of the common people who attended him, though they harboured no malicious intentions against him, yet were a thoughtless, inconsiderate, and sensual, race; strongly possessed with prejudices concerning the rights and privileges of the Jewish nation, as the seed of Abraham and God's peculiar people, and hence were full of contempt and aversion against all the rest of mankind. They were zealous for the law of Moses, as of sacred and perpetual obligation, and reverenced the rites and ceremonies of the law as the perfection of it, and of all human excellence, and the traditions of the elders as the infallible interpretation of the law. They were at this time full of expectations of the immediate appearance of the Messiah; but only under the notion of a deliverer of their nation from foreign oppression, a restorer of their polity, a conqueror of the gentile nations, and a prince who should rule over them for ever in great worldly power and grandeur, and subject the nations to them. But they had no conception of him as a divine instructor, who was to establish the moral kingdom of God over mankind, in the universal obedience of his laws of righteousness, purity, and goodness, or thought that he should abolish the ceremonial part of Moses's institution, and reform and perfect the moral; much less, that he should be the common saviour of mankind from idolatry and wickedness, and their instructor in true piety and universal virtue. In short, the whole of their religion consisted in a zealous attachment to certain prejudices and erroneous opinions, and in the punctual observance of rites, ceremonies, and traditions, whilst they had little regard to the genuine and substantial duties of religion; such as reverence, love, gratitude, submission, and obedience to God, with a conscientious care to know and keep his commandments; little acquaintance with the nature, extent, and obligations, of moral duties, and less attention to practise them; but in fact allowed themselves, without scruple, in many acts of injustice and inhumanity, and indulged in many shameful sensualities.

Now, in what manner must he, who came to seek and to save lost sinners, deal with persons of this temper and character? An open and direct attack upon their prejudices and errors would but have roused their passions, exasperated them against him as an enemy, and

caused them to hold fast their old principles. Had he employed himself continually in explaining the principles of rational and pure religion, and the nature and obligations of moral duty, in the most clear and explicit terms; had he openly taught the full design and extent of that new dispensation of divine grace which he came to establish with mankind; the consequence would have been, with regard to many, disgust and neglect of such dry and disagreeable subjects; and to the rest, all the opposition and cavilling their corrupt passions and appetites, and inveterate prejudices, could raise; but few would have had patience to consider, or disposition to comply with his lessons; however enforced by his pretensions to a divine mission, or those pretensions supported by numberless miracles. The most complete and accurate knowledge of human nature, and those secret springs which powerfully move the heart of man, could not have dictated a more proper method of dealing with persons of such a temper and character as the generality of the Jews were, than that which Jesus actually pursued. He did not fail, indeed, plainly to assert to them the fundamental principles of pure religion, and the leading duties of moral righteousness, purity, and goodness—Principles whose truth every understanding of man must acknowledge: duties whose importance and obligations must force conviction on every heart, when propounded in a true light, and considered with a candid attention: but he left it to the deductions of their own reasons, to follow these convictions into their proper and extensive consequences; and to detect the groundlessness of their errors, and the absurdity of their prejudices, by the light of those principles he furnished them with. He did not, however, constantly or generally pursue this plainer method of instruction, but more often conveyed his doctrines and precepts to their hearts, under the less offensive and more agreeable vehicle of parabolical representations and similitudes, which, by proposing truth under a supposed case of another person or thing, carried instruction and conviction to their understandings, yet avoided hurting their prejudices by a too explicit declaration of disagreeable truths, or encountering their self-love by censures and reproaches. And when he had to do with persons of very distempered minds and depraved hearts, possessed with strong aversions against the truth, his method was, after having asserted his divine mission, and produced some striking attestations of it by miracles, to deliver to them some important doctrines, wrapped up in a veil of obscure expressions, which served to present the objects to them as it were in a mist, or imperfect light, just sufficient to convince them, that something of very great importance was contained in them, but not discover clearly what it was. The natural effect of which would be, to alarm their apprehensions, and fill them with astonishment, and thereby suppress their prejudices and passions, and check the petulance of their cavilling humour; to put them upon serious thoughtfulness and consideration; and, after having fruitlessly endeavour-

ed to comprehend the full design of his obscure expressions, to request from Jesus himself an explication of them, which then perhaps they would be better prepared than at first to receive with candour and impartiality. This seems to me to be the true reason why our Saviour made so frequent use of obscure expressions and difficult parables in his discoures to the Jews. They could not admit of a more direct and explicit treatment. Selfish and sensual dispositions in the heart; high esteem of and dependance on outward forms and ceremonies, rights, and privileges; predominant pride and vanity, on account of these things; joined with a captious and cavilling humour; are things which do most effectually indispose men to a candid and impartial inquiry, or the reception of the truths of rational religion, or the discharge of the duties of moral goodness. This was precisely the distemper of the generality of the Jews, with whom our Saviour had to deal. He does not, however, abandon them, as absolutely incurable and incorrigible, but treats them (not indeed as he would have chosen, if they could have admitted a plainer treatment, but) as their present state of mind would bear, and as was most likely to make impression on them, and bring them to a better state, if any thing could do it; in such a manner as bid fairest to wean off their errors gradually, without hurting them; to excite in them a spirit of consideration and inquiry; to instil truth into them as they could bear it; and inure them to a patient attention and candid admission of truths, which had been most disagreeable to them. Thus he did not use parables and dark expressions in his discourses, in order to conceal the truth from his Jewish audiences, because they were unworthy of it, and by way of punishment for that unworthiness, but out of kindness and condescension to their weakness, because this was the only method in which he could convey his instructions to them, or engage a patient hearing of truths, which, had they been more explicitly delivered, every power, passion, and prejudice, of his hearers would have risen in immediate revolt, and engaged them in the most determined opposition. This, indeed, is the reason which our Lord himself assigns, why he chose this manner of treating with the Jews. Matt. xiii. 10, &c. Being asked by his disciples, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He replies, Because it is given unto you [who are well disposed to receive the truth] to know [clearly] the mysteries [or peculiar doctrines] of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given [to be plainly instructed in them]. For, whosoever hath [i. e. a good disposition to the truth], to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath. Therefore, speak I to them in parables, because, they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand: and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and

their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should turn, and I should heal them. They will not improve their rational faculties: they are averse from the truth, and can be dealt with only in this manner with any prospect of success. In like manner, Mark observes, ch. iv. 33, With many such parables spake he the word unto them (the people) as they were able to hear it: but without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone he expounded all things to his disciples. Nay, on account of the errors and prejudices which they had imbibed in their education in common with the rest of their countrymen, our Saviour was obliged for a considerable time to communicate his instructions only in an obscure, imperfect, and covert manner, even to his own disciples; and therefore in that long discourse he held with them before his sufferings he says, These things have I spoken to you in proverbs (or parables;) the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in parables, but I shall shew you plainly of the father, shall explain to you clearly, the peculiar doctrines which the father hath commanded me to reveal to the world.

(*To be concluded in our next.*)

TESTIMONY OF JOHN BAPTIST TO JESUS.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, *Norwich.*

I should find myself much obliged if any of your ingenious correspondents could give me a satisfactory solution of the disagreement in the gospels of Matthew and John concerning the baptism of Christ, by John the Baptist. Matthew says, ch. iii. v. 13, 14, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" From this passage it plainly appears, that John had a knowledge not only of the person, but of the character of Jesus, previous to his being applied to by him for baptism. John felt his own inferiority, and would have shrunk from the performance of the ceremony, which Christ required at his hands; but on our Saviour's repeating his request, John complied and baptized him.

The Evangelist John's account of this transaction, (ch. i. v. 29, et seq.) is as follows. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, after me cometh a man which is preferred before me, for he was before me; and I knew him not, but that he should be made manifest unto Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. *And I knew him not*, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou

shalt see the spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the son of God." This narrative seems to me to be in direct contradiction to that of Matthew. There John is stated to have known Jesus, and to have known him as the promised Messiah, previous to his baptizing him: here he is stated to have said that at the time Jesus applied to him for baptism, he *knew him not*; and that until he was baptized, there should be no display or declaration on the part of God concerning Christ. This at least is what the words seem to me to imply, and it appears most probable that the narrative of John is the true one, since if John was equally ignorant with the rest of the Jews, if not of the person, at least of the character of Christ, no juggle or collusion of any kind could possibly have taken place between them. I do not know that there is not in existence an explanation of this seeming contradiction, but as I am not much a reader of what are denominated notes on, or explanations of the scriptures, it has not chanced to fall in my way. It is a fortunate thing for persons who are like me, unacquainted with the niceties and subleties of controversial discussion, and who can find in the scriptures in general, nothing but what is plain and practical, that there is such a work in existence, as the Repositary, where a sincere christian desirous of information which he may stand in need of, can apply for it without shame or fear. That your excellent publication may long continue to be applied to, and be supported by every sincere friend to rational inquiry, and that it may be the means of extending the knowledge of the scriptures and enlightening the minds of the many who at present sit in darkness, is the earnest wish

Of your's, &c.

INQUIRER.

JUDGMENT OF THE WORLD BY JESUS CHRIST.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR,

In casting my eye over the Rev. T. Belsham's *Strictures* &c. in your last month's Repository, (Vol. II. p. 587) I observed two or three ingenious suggestions relative to a scripture doctrine, about which I have for a long time past held a peculiar opinion, I mean the doctrine of Jesus Christ's appointment to be the final and universal judge of the world. Whether Mr. Belsham hath given the proper meaning of the passages quoted by him or not, is not material; but, I think it must be allowed, that he hath satisfactorily established his main position, viz. *That the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth, is in no respect inconsistent with his being appointed to judge the world.*

Respecting the obscurity and difficulties which still seem to cover Matt. xix. 28, and 1 Cor. v. 2, 3, and many other passages relative to "*the judgment of the world by Jesus Christ*;"—would

they not be completely solved, or greatly diminished by supposing that the *season and scene* of Christ's judicial process and operations were somewhat altered?

Instead of flying to a heavenly and invisible scene, and referring to a very remote and uncertain period, to obtain a solution of this and some other scripture doctrines might not more simple principles be adopted, equally adequate and far more satisfactory? What can be fairly objected, in the present inquiry, to the hypothesis, that *the judgment of the world by Jesus Christ* (or, which is the same thing, by the principles of his gospel) *commenced at the time* when our Lord's commission to our world was fully established, and the christian doctrine first revealed to man;—and that IT (the universal judgment) hath been perpetually advancing *on* this our earth, ever since that period, and executed according to the same principles on which it first commenced and must be necessarily conducted, wherever the scene of the procedure may be laid? or wherever it began or may begin? Is not the hypothesis strongly countenanced by John v. 22, 23? and also by John xvi. 8? And that noted passage in Acts, the xvii. 29, 30, and 31, doth not positively and clearly contradict it: For the phrase, *will judge*, in the 31st verse, is expressed in Greek terms, which always serve to mark a transaction that is likely to take place immediately or soon after its prediction or annunciation

This hypothesis, it may likewise be added, seems to be the only one that fairly admits of the idea that the saints (meaning all truly sincere, faithful, and consistent christians) are constituted to be assessors with Jesus Christ in the execution of his judicial operations. For do not the faith and practice of true christians *virtually judge* the world; perpetually censuring and condemning the wicked, and approving and encouraging the sincerely pious and good?

The absolute supremacy, perfection, and all-sufficiency of Jehovah forbid the necessity of his having a deputy or an associate to judge the world in the last day, according to the common ideas of that transaction. For being every way adequate for judging the world, as he was for its creation by himself, why must he take a partner in the one more than in the other? Indeed one of the *principal* arguments for a *deferred* and *future* judgment of the world by Jesus Christ, seems to impeach the justice and impartiality of Almighty God's present government of the world; for the delay of justice is injustice, and that which demands amendment or correction must be wrong or imperfect. But who will dare say that the Almighty at any time or in any place. doth things by halves, or any thing that is not the most fit and proper to be done in the administration of his universal and moral providence? The scripture saith, that Almighty God, the father of Jesus Christ, will judge the world in the last day, when all things on this earthly theatre shall receive their final consummation; and the advocates for the common hypothesis of the last judgment allow that the mediatorial agency of Jesus Christ,

at that season, must be consistent with and subordinate to the supreme agency and judgment of his heavenly father. That the Son of Man, our christian mediator, shall be *an assessor* with his Almighty Parent, in that solemn season and transaction, doth not appear to be necessary; and the scriptures commonly adduced for the *sole* or *joint agency* of Jesus Christ as the *final and future* judge of the world do not unequivocally and necessarily limit his judicial acts to a future season, or a remote and invisible scene.

If the preceding suggestions, crude as they are, be not altogether unworthy of your acceptance, please to insert them in one of the early Nos. of your Repository. I remain your's, &c.

B—d—p—t. P. K.

P. S. The common ideas concerning *the judgment of the world by Jesus Christ* appear to be erroneous, (as it is hinted above), because the *season and scene* of the transaction are supposed to be misplaced. Probably other passages of scripture are perverted or obscured by the same causes; and in this point of view I would particularly refer to Hebrews ix. 12 and 24, where *Christ's entering once, by his own blood, into the holy place*, and *his entering into heaven itself to appear for us in the presence of God*, probably refer to nothing else than his ready and voluntary acceptance of the heavenly mission that was conferred on him; and his faithful execution of it by the persevering labours and sufferings of a most virtuous and pious life and conversation.

REVIEW.

"STILL PLEAS'D TO PRAISE, YET NOT AFRAID TO BLAME."

POPE.

ART. I.—*On the Causes of an Indifference to Religious Knowledge, and the Propriety of cultivating the Understanding in respect to Divine Truth. A Sermon, delivered at Horsham, July 8, 1807, before a Society of Unitarian Christians, established in the South of England, &c. &c.* By Samuel Parker. 12mo. 1s. Johnson.

The title of this discourse so well explains its nature, that it is unnecessary for us to say more of it than that it contains good sense and useful instruction, founded on Unitarian principles. These annual publications of our book-societies are well adapted to promote the end of their institution—the spread of Christian knowledge; and as such we cordially recommend them to our readers.

ART. II.—*Letters on Capital Punishments; addressed to the English Judges.* By Beccaria Anglicus. 8vo. pp. 85 Johnson. 2s. 6d. 1807.

These letters have too long escaped our notice. The subject of them is important, and their execution is masterly.

There are but few thinking humane men that are not shocked with the frequency of capital punishments in this country. The best philosophers, the best lawyers, and the best Christians, have long condemned and lamented them; and the present author has collected the chief arguments and persuasions of Beccaria, Blackstone, and Wakefield.

Some of the arguments and illustrations brought forward in these pages are novel; particularly on the inutility and injustice of the punishment of death even in cases of murder.

Beccaria Anglicus writes as a sincere and zealous Christian; and has, if we are not mistaken, appeared before us more than once as the champion of rational religion. Truth and mercy are sisters of the same parent, and ought to be inseparable companions.

The young amongst our readers will accept our recommendation of this work as a *new-year's gift*.

ART. III.—*The Clergy of the Establishment Vindicated. A charge delivered to the Clergy of the diocese of Gloucester, at the triennial visitation of that diocese in the year* 1807. By George Isaac Huntingford, D. D. F. R. S. Bp. of Gloucester. 8vo. pp. 34. Cadell and Davies.

Dr. Huntingford is respectable both as a scholar and a divine. The present charge will not add to his literary reputation, but it sufficiently attests his candour, prudence, and good sense in ecclesiastical matters.

He vindicates the clergy from the charges of not preaching the gospel, and of being Methodists; that is to say, he defends both the ordinary and the evangelical preachers, and exhorts them to unite in common defence against their "malignant and subtle adversaries," the real methodists. He recommends the good old maxim, "*In necessariis unitas; in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus caritas.*" His advice, upon the whole, is worthy of the attention of the clergy, and will not, we trust, be disregarded.

In a note, the bishop enumerates with an allowable pride, the clergymen of his diocese, who are known to the public as authors. The list contains no great names, but several that are respectable; Lysons, Rudge, Fossbrook, Davies, Bowles, and others. The anonymous pamphlet, entitled "Considerations on the Alliance between Christianity and Commerce," is here ascribed to the Rev. Mr. Raikes.

ART. IV.—*The Nature and Importance of Preparatory Studies, Prior to entering on the Christian Ministry, considered. A Sermon, delivered at Loughborough, before the Governors of the General Baptists' Evangelical Academy.* By D. Taylor, 8vo. 1s. Button.

The general baptists have of late been gradually forming two parties. The old denomination lean towards heresy, the new (with the exception of the articles of baptism and general redemption) are attached to orthodoxy. The former are found chiefly in the South, the latter in the Mid-land part of England. It would be difficult to estimate their respective strength, but both parties united would scarcely form a sect of the fourth or fifth order.

Mr. D. Taylor is the head of the Evangelical party, as the new denomination call themselves, to intimate, we suppose, that their old friends are ignorant of the gospel. Their real and publicly recognized name is not here given, it is a curious specimen of the cant of vulgar fanaticism; it is, reader, "Free-Grace-General-Baptists."

The "Free-Grace-General-Baptists" have somewhere (though where does not appear) an academy for students for the ministry; but let us not mistake, it is an *Evangelical Academy;* it is not designed to "*make* ministers;" them, says Mr. Taylor, (p. 17.) the Lord must qualify; nor is it "designed to make young ministers *gentlemen*;" so far from designing this, it aims at the contrary (p. 17, 18) nor is it designed "to make young ministers scholars, or men of *general learning*," for this (p. 19.) "is neither practicable nor necessary." What then is the design of this academy? It is, we conceive, to train up sound Free-Grace-General-Baptist-Ministers.

The author of this discourse is as sensible as it was prudent to be before the governors of an *Evangelical* academy, and as lengthy as an Oliverian professor (were such an one to rise from the grave) could wish.

ART. V.—*The General Union of Believers at the Coming of Christ. A Sermon, preached at Hackney, Aug.* 23d 1807, *on the death of the Rev. Daniel Fisher, D. D.* By S. Palmer. 8vo Conder.

This is a plain but animated discourse, well suited to the occasion. It breathes a truly liberal spirit.

Of Dr. Fisher an account was given in our Obituary for last September. Vol, II. p. 497.

Q.

ART. VI.—*Bartholomew-Day Commemorated. A Discourse on the Use of Persecution in the furtherance of the Gospel. Intended to have been preached Aug.* 24, 1807. By S. Palmer. 8vo. Conder.

It appears that the association lately instituted, of congregational churches throughout the kingdom, appointed a sermon to

be preached by Mr. Palmer, in behalf of the society, on Bartholomew-day last. The sermon was accordingly prepared; but, from what cause does not appear, the day was suffered to pass by without any notice of the engagement, on the part of the managers of the "Independent Union." An "Independent Union" is not far remote from a solecism; and this is no auspicious beginning of the Union of Independents.

The discourse consists of reflections, founded on the history of Paul's persecutions: they are natural and sensible. Mr. Palmer is well known as the advocate of religious liberty, and of the Protestant dissent; and his present publication is not unworthy of the author of the "Nonconformist's Memorial." His brethren, the Independents, have, we think, something to answer for to the public, for the slight put upon one of their most respectable ministers, whether we regard his age, his services, his talents, or his principles. Q.

ART. VII.—*Jewish Prophecy, the sole Criterion to distinguish between genuine and spurious Christian Scripture; or, an humble Attempt to remove the grand Obstacles to the Conversion of Jews and Deists to the Christian Faith, affectionately submitted to their Consideration. A Discourse, preached before the Rev. Dr. William Gretton, Archdeacon of Essex, at his Visitation at Danbury, on Tuesday, the 8th of July* 1806. By Francis Stone, M. A. F. S. A. Rector of Cold Norton, Essex, Author of "A Call to the Jews." The Third Edition. 8vo. 1*s.* 6*d.* London, Eaton, 1808.

This sermon, which we noticed on its first appearance, (Vol. I. p. 490.) has come to a *third edition*. We formerly expressed our admiration of the boldness of the preacher in delivering it, and we cannot now help expressing our admiration of his boldness in republishing it for the third time, pending his prosecution, on account of it, in the spiritual court. We rejoice in its republication, because it will draw the attention of the public to a matter which serves to shew the nature of ecclesiastical government, wherever exercised, whether in Rome, at Geneva, or in Doctor's Commons, and the value of religious liberty. It remains to be seen what will be done with the preacher: in the mean time we call upon the public to watch this interesting case.

To this third edition is prefixed a second preface; which must powerfully interest the feelings of all those in whom bigotry has not entirely taken place of humanity.

POETRY.

REFLECTIONS ON THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

The year is gone.—The year so merciful,
That came with smiling plenty to our doors
And bid us welcome. Gay its blushing spring,
And long and beautiful its summer: bright
And beneficent, the golden autumn pour'd
O'er all the land its bounty; and mild its close:
For winter hurried on with shrouded brow,

And scarcely shew'd his face. Yet has proud man
With crime and blood each goodly day deform'd,
And mad as hellish War, with him combined
To desolate the nations.—All the earth
Has heard their horrid uproar: all the earth
Groans with despair, and languishes for peace.
Europe has nursed the fiend! Europe the seat
Of every polish'd art; where science shines
Unclouded; where the will of heaven is known
And taught most publicly; commanding peace,
And brotherly affection to her sons.
And yet for years and years the havock spreads,
And o'er the world hurls ruin! Heaven is mocked
With creeds absurd; but peace and love divine,
And charity, how little are they known!
Yet one proud triumph of humanity
Has blessed the vanish'd year; one glad event
Nations unborn shall jubilate. Justice
Has heard the prayer, ascending long,
Of injured Africa: has heard and broke
Her galling chains. Yet sordid avarice
Mourns and reviles—May she revile and mourn
For *ever!*—Christians! all ye who send
To farthest climes your teachers; holy men
The Bramin and the Indian to convert:
Oh, study well your motives; study well
The pure and simple doctrines of your faith
Nor fill the willing ear with mysteries
Worse than unprofitable; the frothy food
Of wild imagination. First at home
Let the pure gospel spread, the truth unmixed
With pagan or with popish fooleries.
Hail to the enlighten'd few * who nobly stand
Amidst a world in arms, to propagate
The creed of peace. How grateful 'tis to turn
From sickening scenes of blood, to contemplate
Your generous efforts: bewilder'd long
In the dark mazes of blind prejudice,
Oh, lead the virtuous forth! and reason's ray
Shall guide them on to light and liberty:
To gospel liberty, and gospel light,
That shines for all.—May each succeeding year
Witness your triumphs (far dearer to the good
Than war's proud victories) till war himself
Is vanquished! Then o'er the happy world,
Shall peace and righteousness, for ever reign.

W. A.

London.

THE SIMILE.

The sun this morn arose at early dawn,
And with her rays adorn'd both hill and dale,
Deck'd with gay pearls the dew-bespangled lawn,
And roused to life and joy the drowsy vale.

But long before meridian heights it pass'd,
The winds bemoan'd a change with plaintive sigh,
The gathering clouds frown'd on the coming blast,
And deep ton'd thunder roll'd along the sky;

The gloom prevail'd till evening shades drew near,
When Cynthia rose to cheer the dreary scene,
And spread her lucid beams with rays so clear,
That all around assum'd a mild serene.

With magic charm she hush'd each murmuring wind,
And soon transform'd the scene so late forlorn,
Dispell'd each cloud to her mild beams unkind,
And gave the promise of a fairer morn.

I watch'd her silver orb ascend on high,
And felt my spirits, and my hopes renew'd;
And whilst the big tear trembled in my eye,
And all the day's quick changes I review'd:

Such is my day of life, I faintly cried,
Hope's radiant beams shone on my youthful head,
Love's flattering dreams to youth's gay schemes allied,
O'er every future scene illusions spread.

But ah! whilst yet each flattering bliss was new,

* The Unitarian Fund Society.

Sad disappointment cropp'd the promised joy!
Bade each delight recede before my view,
And storms of sorrow every hope destroy!

Where'er I turn'd I met with nought but grief,
And oft appall'd I view'd fate's dreadful scowl,
Till a kind angel rose to my relief,
Which cheer'd with purest hopes my drooping soul.

As Cynthia's rays, her heaven-taught smile appear'd,
Fair as that silver orb her cloudless brow;
Her seraph voice my sinking spirits cheer'd,
And peace recall'd, to her mild dictates true.

"Unhappy mourner, cease thy plaint," she said
"Nor yield thy bosom thus to dark despair.
"Will he who taught the rose its leaves to spread,
"Not watch thee also with a tender care?

"Make me thy guide, Religion is my name,
"Simple my precepts, and each promise sure:
"Whate'er betides thou'lt find me still the same,
"For all my ways are holy, just, and pure.

"When storms assail, in me a friend thou'lt find,
"To sooth each pain, and quiet every fear,
"Teach thee to bow to heaven with heart resign'd,
"And the dark moments of distress to cheer.

"Or when disease or age thy frame has torn,
"And life's gay pageants sink before thy view:
"Faithful I'll guide thee to an endless morn,
"Where life, and love, and bliss will all renew."

Translation of 137th Psalm.

Where silver streams, with pleasing murmurs flow,
And gently wave on Babel's fertile plains,
While blooming flowers with grateful fragrance grow,
And music tunes the harp to syren's strains;

Our pensive thoughts in sadness paint the scene,
While fond remembrance views our former years,
In vain the lawns are drest in pleasing green,
While captive sorrow pours the gushing tears.

Our trembling hands unstring the useless lyre,
No more the notes of rapture rend the skies,
No more our altars blaze with sacred fire,
Nor hymns of praise from thankful bosoms rise.

While crushed beneath oppression's iron hand,
What pleasing accents can our voices raise?
Then did our tyrants songs of mirth demand,
'Twas then our harps must strike the joyful lays.

Shall solemn sounds with grateful ardours swell
The pomp of praise? Alas! the task were vain!
Vainly the music floats along the gale,
While mirth deriding mocks the pious strain.

Ye dear Judean plains, where oft I've strayed,
In fancy's views I see the landscape rise,
Often in youth I've trod your silent shade,
Near yonder sacred dome that ruin'd lies.

If e'er the prospect fly my faithless heart,
Be mute my tongue, nor more my skill employ,
"The living lyre," whose rapt'rous sounds impart
A calm delight, and mark the hours to joy.

Study of Politics.—French Revolution.

While sacred Salem felt the direful rage,
Then Edom's sons could no soft pity share,
Nor melting cries their harden'd breasts assuage,
Nor shrieks of woe, nor groans of deep despair.

Tho' righteous heav'n correct with servile chains,
The hour may come relenting at our moan,
Which rolls the tide of vengeance o'er these plains,
And raging pay, with justice, groan for groan.

Ye soft Assyrian nymphs who careless roam,
Or lie reclin'd beneath th' embow'ring tree,
The hour may come, far distant from your home,
You'll feel the pangs which sorrow gives to me.

The tender child, unconscious of its foes,
Some ruthless hand its youthful blood shall stain,
His heart shall joyous laugh to hear your woes,
To him relentless you shall weep in vain.

LYSANDER.

Newburg, Fifeshire

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

The Christian's Survey of the Political World.

Study of Politics.—French Revolution.

A LATE celebrated bishop of this realm has observed, that religion and politics ought to be the chief studies of a creature like man; and without doubt the leisure that the business and rational amusements of life permit to any individual, cannot be better employed than in these pursuits. The politics of a Christian are not indeed of this world; but, as he lives in this world, and revelation itself opens his views to the political concerns of life, he cannot be indifferent to the scenes, in which he lives, and in which he must be interested, both as they affect his own country and the general welfare of mankind. Two obstacles present themselves to these studies: the one raised by the priest, the other by the statesman. The former fears inquiry lest his favourite system should be overturned; and, like Demetrius and his workmen, he cries out: Great is Diana of the Ephesians. Pry not too narrowly into mysteries. The triple headed Cerberus is at the entrance to frighten away every rude, or rash, or meek intruder. The statesman is equally fearful, that much knowledge will injure his schemes: that the people's obedience to laws will be shaken by too much inquiry into their propriety and utility. Both priest and statesman have acted for centuries upon these maxims, and the consequence has been the French revolution, that terrible volcano, by which God and nature have torn down institutions founded on superstition and false policy.

To live in such scenes must have created many an awful thought in the mind of the true Christian. He must have remarked with sorrow the varying councils which have guided the cabinets of princes, and the decisions of the multitude; he must have lamented the want of that confidence in scripture, which would have taught every cabinet, that to resist God is a futile attempt; and it could never have been the intention of Divine Wisdom, that a great nation, like France, should always be kept in the chains of the abominable and

wicked superstition of the church of Rome. Even without regard to scripture, the statesman might have known, that he could not stem the torrent, whose overflowings had been predicted upwards of half a century before, equally by the serious Christian and the Infidel. The pages of Hartley are very strong on the destruction of the governments of Europe; and they are confirmed by the writings of Chesterfield, Hume, Rousseau, Voltaire, and many other celebrated writers.

To understand the political events of the present days, we must look back to a distant period. It is not necessary to go up to the original creation of man; but the Christian will be attentive to prophecy, and his basis is on that great prophecy revealed to a statesman, to a prime minister, to Daniel, one of the wisest of the sons of the east. He has given us a view of the four great empires destined to fill the world with blood and slaughter, and devastation. Under the image of that abominable statue erected by the proud king of Babylon, the emblem of civil and religious tyranny: he has described the governments of the world most interesting to us. The horrible statue is not completely fallen from its base. The stone, cut out of the mountains without hands, has not performed its work; yet the Christian rejoices in the midst of the troubles of the times, that the statue must fall, and civil and religious tyranny be abolished.

We live in the later times, predicted under that image. We have seen the complete fall of the Roman empire and name. No longer is there any Cæsar; for it must be kept in mind, that till very lately this was the title of the head of the German states, and his title was that of head of the holy Roman empire. A new power has ari en in Europe. It has sprung up from the waves; and now, standing on the shore, fills the world with terror. How far it will resemble the former beast, time must discover. The Christian would feel anxiety, if his master had not taught him not to be anxious for any thing, at the steps taken by this horrible beast. But he may roar, and the nations may tremble at his voice. He can perform only the commands of the most high, whatever may be the secret thoughts of his heart. God has pulled down the mighty and raised up the low. This may appear marvellous to the multitude; but high and low are the same in the sight of God and the true Christian; and every thing conduces to the establishment of that kingdom, which must finally be erected on the earth.

We begin our survey, as far as it relates to our own country, at a very extraordinary crisis. A few years ago, Great Britain joined in the great confederacy against France: that confederacy has been completely broken, and in every object or pretended object of that unnatural confederacy, Great Britain has completely failed. The King of Great Britain has lost his hereditary dominons on the Continent. The nations of Europe have quitted her standard. She, who supplied money in profusion, is now left without an ally, except we may reckon as such Sardinia and Sweden. As great an outcry as Great Britain raised against France, a few years ago, just as great an outcry has France raised against England, for its pretended inordinate tyranny on the seas: and in this cry the nations of Europe have joined with her, and they range themselves heart and hand under the French standard. A war of a very extraordinary nature has taken place of that which lately desolated the Continent. The nations of Europe are employed in healing the wounds inflicted on them; and Great Britain and France stand forward as the two great contending powers.

Attempts have been made to restore peace to mankind; the one by means of Russia, the other by means of Austria. The mediation of these powers has been rejected by Great Britain, and the ambassadors of both powers have left our court. We have declared war against our ancient ally of Russia, and we shall probably soon hear, that Austria has declared war against us. Great Britain, excluded from the Continent, and deserted by every ally, has now to lament, that it poured forth its treasures in so lavish and so useless a manner on the Continent. It is a trading nation, and a war is made on its commerce. Regulations have been made in this country, and in France and Spain, by which commerce will be cut up to the roots. That intercourse, which civilizes mankind, and brings to all the blessings of Providence, is destroyed. Man, whose duty it is to promote the happiness of

his brother in every place, is busily employed in devising the means to counteract every effort of wisdom and virtue. May God send wisdom to the rulers of the earth, and may the ministers of the gospel of peace endeavour to soothe the minds of the contending parties, and induce them to consult each other's happiness and true glory.

France is now the prominent feature in Europe. Its sovereign is busily employed in every work that can encourage his subjects in useful arts. The country is reviving from its wounds. It is reconciled to every deprivation of foreign luxury, and enters heartily into the spirit of the decrees by which every thing English is prohibited from entering into its ports, except as seizures or as prisoners of war. We know not what has been the effect of the emperor's late journey to Italy, but there is reason to be apprehensive, that a scheme will soon be developed, which will place all Greece under his influence. Austria and Russia will gain on the side of the Danube, and both powers are as heartily on the side of the great conqueror, as they formerly were with England.

The Turkish empire is in great confusion. It presents every where the appearance of a speedy dissolution; and the Mahometan, like the Popish superstition, bears evident marks of decay. We have not sufficient intelligence from Arabia, to know the state of a great sect there, which has attacked the Mahometan faith. It is supposed to spread very fast, but in ruining the belief in the impostor, it may not erect the truth in its stead. Thus the two horrible superstitions, Popery and Mahometanism, which arose nearly at the same time, are likely at the same time to come to a conclusion. Both have rejected the revelation of God for the traditions of men. The former has set up a false object of worship, under the names of a Trinity, a Mother of God, and fictitious saints: the latter, preserving the worship of one true God, has united with it the reveries of a sensual and intolerant impostor. Both have equally endeavoured to make the kingdom of Christ, a kingdom of this world; both have had their monks, and priests, and bishops, exercising the worst of tyrannies over the consciences of men. The true Christian must lament, that Protestants do not rejoice as they ought, that these ecclesiatical dominions are soon to be abolished.

As Europe, with the exception of Sweden, bends under the French yoke or the French influence, we must wait some time before we see the full effects of such a change. A most extraordinary scene has presented itself. The government of Portugal has transplanted itself to the Brazils. It possesses those extensive territories, and may found a mighty empire. We should hope, that the experience of the past will teach it true wisdom; and that it will now encourage a liberal spirit of inquiry, promote arts, and banish bigotry, intolerance, and superstition. This will be a singular instance in the history of mankind, if the empire is to be established, of a cabinet improving by adversity.

There is every reason to believe, that Spanish America will soon be freed from the Spanish yoke: and the new world will present new scenes of politics and civilization. Happy, if it rejects some of the arts of the old world, particularly that attachment to war, that beastly gratification in the arts of destruction, by which the European has for the last century been particularly distinguished. In the northern states, agriculture and civilization are extending their conquests; and we are soon to see the novel sight of a chief being elected by the people, as the present president has signified his determination to decline in future the important trust, with which he has for some time been invested.

Of the far greater part of the world we can say nothing. Myriads do not enter into our contests. Myriads are removed from the clash of Christian swords; and we are sorry to say, are carried away by the grossest superstition. But how can we expect the conversion of the Idolater, when Christians themselves set so base an example, and even the efforts made by some zealous persons, are attended with such an alloy of superstition and false worship, that the mind is almost in doubt which is worst, to give the poor idolater a new, or to leave him in possession of his old superstition. But a variety of thoughts crowds on our minds on this subject; and we must close our survey by strenuously urging on every Christian, that before he attempts to convert others, he should be convinced, that his own religion is founded, not on the fallacious

tradi'ions of man, but on the true doctrine of Christ and his apostles. To know this, let him examine himself by this test. Am I under the dominion of any man or set of men in my religious worship? Have he or they drawn up any articles of faith, and do they presume to say, that every man must believe what these articles impose? These questions are very solemn; for it is to no purpose, that a man pretends to call himself a Christian, whilst he disobeys his Saviour, by allowing any man or set of men whatsoever, to give rules to his faith. Christ has ordered us to call no man ruler in matters of faith upon earth.

OBITUARY.

Rev. F. G. Lecun.—Rev. J. Newton, &c.

October 16, at Kingston, Jamaica, the Rev. FRANCOIS G. LECUN, Pastor of the Roman Catholic Chapel, and the Apostolic Prefect of the Pope for the West Indies. His christian eloquence, his eminent virtues, and his charity, render his loss irreparable to the members of the Roman Catholic church.

November 1, 1807, at the Countess of Huntingdon's College, at Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, the Rev. RICHARD OWEN, aged 30, tutor of that seminary. He had been formerly a student there. He had been tutor only since the commencement of the year of his death. Dr. Draper, of London, is said (*Ev. Mag.*) to have accepted the office vacated by the death of Mr. Owen.

December 21, in his 83d year, the Rev. J. NEWTON, Rector of St. Mary Woolnorth, Lombard-street, London. Of this amiable and respectable Clergyman a friend has promised us a memoir for an early number. He is succeeded by the Rev. S. Birch, son of Alderman Birch, who we apprehend will not preach a doctrine that will suit Mr. Newton's admirers, and whose promotion is, no doubt, a reward of his father's *political services*. This is a good exemplification, for the benefit of *Evangelical* churchmen, of the utility of national churches!

January 4, at Berry Pomeroy, near Totnes, soon after he had completed his 27th year, Mr. WILLIAM LANE, jun. He had been married about 12 months to an amiable and accomplished young lady, by whom, as well as by his relatives, and all those who were intimately acquainted with him, his loss is most severely felt. Mr. L. was a young man of strong natural abilities, and by great application had attained a considerable share of classical learning, and a knowledge of most of the liberal sciences. He was engaged in the profession of the law; and frequently after his mind had been occupied during the day by its duties, he devoted the whole of the night to study, without allowing himself a moment's sleep. This was more than a constitution naturally very weak could bear, and repeated attacks of colds at length terminated in consumption. Some months since he went to Clifton, and put himself under the care of Dr. Fox, and afterwards of Dr. Beddoes, but even then he had very little hope of his own recovery. In a letter from thence to the writer of this he says, "The obstinacy of my complaint gives way to nothing. Weakness gains upon me fast. I am now given to understand, of which I was before convinced, that there can be but little chance of my recovery. It is quite time for me to prepare to die." And he *was* prepared to die, and his death was a happy one: he considered it only as a sleep from which he should ere long awake on the morning of an eternal day of happiness. When lying on his death bed, from which he rose not for more than three months, not a sigh or a murmur escaped him. He retained the use of all his faculties to the last, and death came tranquilly and calmly on him, like sleep on the good man. M.W.

January 7, Mrs. HOLDEN, aged 85, widow of the Rev. Lawrence Holden, 40 years Minister of the Meeting at Maldon, in Essex.

January 17, of a typhus fever, in the 20th year of his age, Viscount TRAFALGAR, only son of Earl Nelson. His Lordship was a student at Christ's College, Oxford. His father, his uncle, and his grandfather were all members of the same society.

This event furnishes a new and af-

fecting instance of the vanity of human expectations, and serves to mock the nothingness of all sublunary honours. The "Immortal Nelson" (such is the flattery of worms to their fellow-worms) was cut off in the midst of the very victory which crowned him as a hero. His immediate heir was his brother, a Clergyman, whose profession prevented him, in a measure, from maintaining the lustre of the hero's name, and whom, it is said, *other circumstances* (not to be here plainly stated) debarred him from rising to any very high clerical dignity. His only son seemed born to sustain the honour of the family, and to enjoy the munificence of a grateful nation—a princely fortune, and the highest distinctions awarded him. What earthly situation could be more enviable? But, alas! death is not to be bribed or soothed by fortune. The distinguished youth has been called to follow his illustrious and heroic uncle to the tomb; and his disappointed family are left to wonder that the awards of Providence, and those of human senates, are so widely dissimilar. Were the day of Nelson's fall to be marked, like that of Charles's martyrdom, as a holiday in our calendars, we would propound it to our divines, who made themselves so memorable by their sermons in celebration of the victory off Trafalgar, whether the melancholy occasion might not be suitably improved by the serious consideration of Bildad's prophecy, Job. xviii. 19.

INTELLIGENCE.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTATION OF THE HIBERNIAN SOCIETY.

[Amongst other improvements which we have projected in the *Monthly Repository*, it is our intention to lay before our readers, as regularly and as early as our arrangements will permit, ABSTRACTS OF THE REPORTS OF RELIGIOUS AND PHILANTHROPIC SOCIETIES, accompanied with Remarks. As the labour of this new department of our work will press heavily upon us, we request the assistance of our intelligent correspondents. EDITOR.]

THE Hibernian Society, for the diffusion of religious knowledge in Ireland, by means of the ministry of the gospel, of tracts, and of schools, whose establishment we noticed in our first volume, page 108, appointed a Deputation to visit Ireland during the course of the last summer, whose Report we announced for publication in our second volume, page 504. This Report is now in our hands. It is an 8vo. pamphlet of 64 pages, and is published by Williams and Smith.

The Deputation consisted of S. Mills, Esq. of London; Treasurer to the Society; Rev. D. Bogue, of Gosport; Rev T. Charles, of Bala; and Rev. J. Hughes, of Battersea. Their Report is, with a few exceptions of turgidity and obscurity, well drawn up, and is creditable to their spirit and views. It is sober and moderate, and if it derives little interest from minute particularities has at least little of the invidiousness or fulsomeness which sometimes accompanies such statements.

The gentlemen of the Deputation advert very cautiously to the political state of Ireland, but it is evident, from many passages of the Report, that they consider her as a much-wronged country; and that they regard a mild and tolerant system of policy as necessary to her tranquillity and security. They tell us, in common with all men of sense and humanity, that the papists are not to be converted by rigour, and that penal religious laws defeat their own end. Would to God the English Court were accessible to reason and persuasion; and that, by any deputation, by any argument and remonstrance, our protestant ministers of state could be converted to a knowledge of the first principles of Christianity!

The Deputies spent a month in Ireland, taking different routes. They were well received. They exhort their constituents to continue to increase their efforts, and encourage them to hope for the ultimate accomplishment of the object of their association.

Ireland is yet in a feverish state, and we fear the prescriptions of the No Popery physicians will force her into a dangerous crisis. Alarms of insurrection prevailed in Dublin when the Deputation first reached it, and the patrol was augmented: they congratulate them-

selves, rather ludicrously, we think, upon their courage in not re-embarking: they were assured in their minds by perceiving no symptom of dismay among the citizens.

At Waterford, our travellers observed a very pleasing institution: they found a rude building occupied by what is there called A Voluntary School, that is, a school gratuitously conducted, during the holidays, by the senior boys. The management of the juvenile teachers, and the subordination of the scholars, are said to be such as one often looks for in vain in seminaries conducted by persons of mature age. It is not stated whether this be a protestant or a popish establishment: we suppose the latter.

Limerick, in point of moral reputation, is described as rather below the average. *Wicked Limerick* was noticed in many circles as a familiar expression. A circumstance, already published throughout the kingdom, happened during the visit to this city. As the bishop of the diocese was returning from the residence of Lady Clare, who lives within a few miles of Limerick, he was stopped, dragged out of his carriage, robbed, and severely wounded. But this circumstance, say the Reporters, is not adduced in confirmation of the unfavourable sentiment which prevails concerning that city. For it should be recollected, they add, with not a little censoriousness, and with much coarseness, that the outrage was committed in the race-week, a period which invites within the circle of *brutal dissipation* all the genteel and all the vulgar *criminals* of a county. Did many remarks of this kind occur in the Report, we should place little confidence in its description of Irish manners and morals.

Passing through the market-place in Armagh, the Deputies heard a preacher in Mr. Wesley's connexion address a rather numerous auditory, in the open air. It was market-day, and the crowd was considerable; but no one, either of those who listened to the sermon, or of those who went to and fro on business, was observed to create disturbance, or even to look disdain; and it was remarked, that a behaviour contrary to what was then exhibited, would have excited surprize. These are the bigotted, persecuting papists, who, according to that sound divine, Mr. Perceval, would, if relieved from oppression in Ireland, re-light the fires of Smithfield, in London!

In the way to Sligo and Armagh, the Deputation met persons going to perform stations; that *is*, to perpetuate or regain the favour of Heaven, by paying fees, repeating ave-marias and paternosters, and doing still severer penance at certain wells and other places accounted holy. A lake was mentioned into which butter is thrown, with the hope that after this offering the cows will yield a greater abundance of rich milk. But the head-quarters of these exhibitions is Croagh-Patrick, a lofty hill in the county of Mayo, from which St. Patrick, the titular saint of Ireland, is said to have driven all the venomous reptiles of the country into the Atlantic ocean. Thousands are supposed to visit this hill every year; many others, who are prevented from visiting it, settle for their sins by proxy, being accommodated in these matters by a hermit, who resides on the sacred spot, and, at a stipulated price, performs stations on behalf of the sick that cannot travel, and of the opulent that will not.

The national character of the Irish is acknowledged by the Deputies to be hospitable, frank, patient, and grateful; though they are, as might be expected, rigorous censors of their religion. The various sects in Ireland are estimated rather hastily and presumptuously, as to their numbers and their *evangelical* worth: by what arithmetic their vital religion is summed up it is not difficult to discover; but the Deputies would probably disclaim the rules by which they have performed their spiritual calculations. They seem to have gone upon the golden rule of St. Augustine, that virtue is of subordinate worth, unless set off by the ornament of orthodox believing: as in their evangelical census of the Catholics and Quakers.

The Roman Catholics are in the proportion of five to one in Dublin, and in every province, except Ulster, they abound in a much higher proportion. For several years past, their numbers have been increasing. New chapels, capacious, and advantageously situated, meet the eye in every direction. There are few instances of the conversion of the Catholics to the Reformed religion, but many of the accession of the Protestants to the Popish faith, chiefly brought about by intermarriages. We conjecture also that many descendants

of protestant families declare themselves catholics in these critical times, with a view to personal security. The priests of the old persuasion possess all the zeal of their order, heightened by a consciousness of the strength of their party, and embittered by a sense of their oppression.—The designs of the Hibernian Society are known and opposed in Ireland. The common people are forbidden by the priests to accept or to pick up religious tracts. "Ignorance," exclaim the Deputies," is the mother of their devotion! absurdity is their chosen element!" Contemptible, indeed, is the fear of knowledge! Execrable the attempt to prevent men from reading and thinking on religion! The exclamation of the Deputies does them honour. How must they have exclaimed on seeing, since their return, a Sermon by a dissenting minister, in this enlightened metropolis, in which the very plan of the Irish priests is recommended, which Sermon is published at the request of the body of London Independent ministers! We should like to see their Report upon this matter. But Mr. J. Clayton only forbids the reading of *improper books!* What do his brethren of Ireland do more? They, too, are zealous and vigilant of the truth, of evangelical peculiarities, and we fancy they would gladly circulate Mr. J. Clayton's Sermon, with very few alterations; only, for his Recommendatory Index they might substitute, with more consistency, an *Index Expurgatorius.*—The existence of two languages in Ireland is a bar to the spread of knowledge; particularly, as the native Irish tongue, though commonly spoken, is read by comparatively few, nor can it generally be taught, for want of elementary books.—The Deputies sum up their account of the Roman Catholics with delivering one of the most offensive sentiments that, with the exception of the whole of Mr. J. Clayton's Sermon, we have lately met with: "I they say, to translate them into plain language, that it cannot be hoped that the Irish will ever be a loyal and tranquil people till they are brought off from popery! Is it meant that papists never make good subjects? or that they never submit cheerfully to a protestant government? If the former, the history of every state on the continent refutes the supposition: if the latter, Canada will at once settle the argument. The reflection shews that the Deputies have taken a very narrow view of things; and that, without intending it, they are very capable of administering fuel to the destructive prejudices which have so long, alas! laid waste the sister island.

The Protestant Episcopalians, that is, the members of the established church, are computed at half a million. The Deputies at once pity the arduous situation and censure the indolence of the clergy: the churches are for the most part opened but once a day. The crying evil of non-residence is, however, scarcely touched upon. Ireland has a few Evangelical or Methodist clergymen, in whom the Deputation naturally rejoice. And they recommend the endeavouring to fill curacies and benefices in that country with the same description of men. This plan has been successfully pursuing some time in England, and especially in the metropolis; and threatens, we think, to effect a revolution, in our view wholly undesirable, in the Established Church.

The Presbyterians have upwards of one hundred and sixty congregations, and are about as numerous as the Episcopalians. They abound chiefly to the north of Dublin. Some of the congregations are much reduced, and but for the allowance from government would expire; others are very flourishing. A circumstance transpires in the Report concerning the Presbyterians which has been long known to us. They have departed from the essential articles of faith; that is, THEY ARE NO LONGER CALVINISTS! To this cause the Deputies, as was to be expected, attribute the decay of such congregations as have declined; but with a perverseness which can be accounted for only from a party spirit, they will not allow that the *advantageous exterior* of the more numerous one bears any relation to the same circumstance. The fact is, we believe, that a large proportion of the Irish Presbyterians are, like their brethren in England, Unitarians; and we confidently look forward to their declaring themselves and co-operating with those English Dissenters who now assume that honourable name.

Seceders from the Presbyterians, who have hitherto been divided, as in Scotland, into Burghers and Anti-Burghers, (though the distinction is wearing away,) have about ninety congregations, all, as appears from the Report, tenaciously Calvinistic.

The Wesleian Methodists, who have been embodied in Ireland above half a century, were stated, at the last conference, to amount to 24,560; to which must be added a much larger number, who attend the meetings, but are not enrolled in the society. They profess to be in communion with the church of Ireland. A few of their preachers, called Irish Missionaries, ride into markets and fairs, and preach on horseback in the Irish language. Among the Methodists are chiefly found the instances of conversion from popery. With a becoming spirit, the Deputies mark both the excellencies and defects of this enterprising growing order, who every where are entitled to much praise, and have something, we think, to answer for.

The Quakers are described as here and there numerous, and are praised by the Deputation for their *good behaviour*. A design pervades the short paragraph which relates to them, of smoothing them into approbation of the Hibernian Society.

Ireland contains five or six congregations of Baptists, which are in the last stage of decline. It were to be wished, that the Report had pourtrayed this sect more minutely than by charging it, merely, with declension from the faith.

The Independents have but recently obtained a footing in Ireland. They are (so say the Deputies) richly Evangelical.

Last in the list of dissidents are the advocates of Marked Separation; fanatics whose only distinction seems to be a violent hatred of all Christians not comprehended in their own little circle. From them the Deputies learn, very properly, a lesson of charity; a lesson, as will have been seen from the foregoing abstract of their Report, not a little wanted.

The remarks accompanying this epitome are free but not ill natured. We admire Christian zeal wherever we see it. We willingly admit the good intentions and truly Christian views of the members of the Hibernian Society; and we heartily wish it success in every attempt to meliorate the condition of that unhappy country, which wants nothing but good government, and more extended knowledge, to put it on a level, in point of national advantage, with the rest of the United Kingdom.

UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA.

[Under this head we have already given some accounts of the progress of rational religion in the United States. (Vide *Monthly Repository*, Vol. I. p. 385, 441. and 668, and Vol. II. p. 47. and 332.) We shall continue to lay regularly before our readers such information as reaches us, and we intreat the communication of such of our readers as correspond with America, or possess any other means of knowing the religious state of the American religious denominations. EDITOR.]

Two small pamphlets, by Mr. William Christie, of Philadelphia, have lately reached England, from which we learn some particulars as to the state of Unitarianism in that city. The Unitarians there have it seems divided; but this may be no unpromising symptom, for the same zeal which leads them to separate, may cause them to make advances amongst their fellow citizens; and two congregations may flourish where before one languished.

The pamphlets were both published at Philadelphia, in the last year, 1807. One is entitled "Remarks on the Constitution framed by three leading Members, and lately adopted by a Majority of the Society of Unitarian Christians, who assemble in Church Alley, styling themselves the First Society of Unitarian Christians, in the city of Philadelphia; as also on the explanatory Observations thereto annexed.—By a late Member of that Society, who rejected the said Constitution." The other is entitled "A Sequel to the Remarks on the Constitution, &c. containing a Defence of the Remarks and their Author. By William Christie, the Author of the said Remarks."

It appears that the "The first society of Unitarian Christians in the city of Philadelphia," (a truly honourable appellation) has not been long formed. Mr. W. Christie has been their minister. They have several times changed their place of worship, being driven about apparently by prejudice against Unitarianism. Unitarian worship had been once before instituted in Philadelphia, but was stopped, and on the removal of the *First Society* from place to place, some of their members appeared discouraged, though their last settlement is prosperous.

We judge that the congregation consists of persons not wholly agreed on all points, as Mr. Christie has, he says, given the majority offence by his boldness and plainness in preaching the Unitarian doctrine. But he may have

offended them more by his manner than his matter. And they may think it prudent in the present stage of free inquiry in America, to take especial care not to alarm or irritate prejudice by incautiousness.

The society has split on the ground (so fatal to the church in all ages) of ecclesiastical discipline. Mr. Christie was for the apostolic model, such as is observed in dissenting congregations in Great Britain; but the majority of the society were for regulations better adapted as they thought to the latitude of their country. They retain a pastor but limit his power: they have done away with elders and deacons, and have substituted in their place a committee of management, to be annually chosen. Their form of government is wholly democratic.

The occasion of the schism in the society was the proposal by some of the members, and the adoption by the majority, of a new ecclesiastical constitution, with certain articles of faith. What the articles were, the pamphlets do not inform us: the rules of membership were these; that persons of every religious denomination, whether Catholic or Protestant (provided their behaviour were serious and proper) should have free access to the Lord's table at all times; that a contribution to any amount paid quarterly, for twelve months previous to the election, with a constant attendance on the meetings of the society, should qualify a person to vote in the choice of a pastor, but not to give a vote in other matters, such as the election of committee men; that persons of either sex, in full age, contributing in their own right, not less than four dollars per annum, should have a right to vote in all the proceedings of the society, having first subscribed the declaration and rules.—These and other laws were considered by Mr. Christie as a departure from the order of the New Testament, as derogating from the pastoral authority, and as infringing on Christian liberty. He accordingly protested against them, but his objections being overruled, he withdrew from the society. He was followed by some other members, who have united with him in a new church, under the denomination of *The Independent Society of Unitarian Christians.* This society meets in North Sixth Street. The members, by an unanimous vote, have declared their firm and solemn assent to the divine revelations contained in the Old and New Testaments as the only rule of faith, practice, worship, and church discipline.

There are then two Unitarian churches in Philadelphia; both small we apprehend, and both, no doubt, at present jealous of each other. But, as we before expressed ourselves, they may, under the divine blessing, be more useful in their separation than in conjunction. Time will, we trust, cool their unfriendly heats, without lowering their zeal; and their vigilant observance of each other, may stir them up to equal circumspection and exertion.

One reason assigned by the original society for choosing a committee in the room of elders and deacons, was the difficulty of "procuring a passport for them to the regular discharge of their functions by ordination." To this Mr. Christie replies as follows:

"Dissenting ministers and elders in England are often elected and authorized to perform every part of their duty, by their own congregations, with the countenance of one or two neighbouring ministers, when it can be conveniently obtained, but without such assistance where it cannot be procured. In this country we had a noble instance of a like kind transacted upwards of fifty years ago, by the first Episcopal church of Boston, who when the bishop of New England refused to ordain Mr. Freeman, their minister *ordained him themselves* after solemn prayer, by voting and executing a deed or instrument appointing him their rector, minister, priest, pastor, teaching elder, and public teacher, to preach the word of God, to minister the Holy Sacrament to the congregation, &c. &c. and that the authority and rights hereby given should remain in full force so long as he should continue to preach the word of God, &c. and no longer. Mr. F. then signified his acceptance of the election and ordination, and that he believed it to be apostolic and valid. After which the senior warden declared him duly ordained, and whilst in a most interesting manner he exhorted him to do his duty with fidelity, he laid one hand upon him, and with the other delivered him the bible, enjoining him to make that sacred book the rule of his faith and conduct. Then followed prayer and a blessing."

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Letter from Mr. Fullagar, Secretary to the Southern Unitarian Society, dated Isle of Wight, January 16, 1808, came too late for insertion. It will, we trust, answer the end of the writer, if we give the substance of it in this place.—At the last Annual Meeting of the S. U. Society, at Horsham, it was resolved (see M. Repos. Vol. II. 394.) to hold the next annual meeting at Dichling, Sussex: an opinion, however, had gone abroad, that this appointment was to be altered: at the quarterly meeting of the Committee, therefore, on the 13th ult. the original resolution was confirmed. The Committee were the more strongly induced to confirm the appointment of the next annual meeting at Dichling, on account of the encouraging report of the labours of Mr. Bennett, of that place, lately made by the Unitarian Fund: they feel a strong desire to countenance Mr. Bennett, and to strengthen his hands. The Secretary expresses, in their name, the most cordial satisfaction with the measures of the Unitarian Fund, and the liveliest hopes of their success.

We have received a second letter from J. D. which, though it fails of convincing us, either that it became us to insert his first letter, or that our remarks upon it (see *Correspondence*, Vol. II. p. 672) were improper, is yet penned with so much good humour as to disarm us of our resentment, and to make us regret that we cannot lay it before our readers. Our remarks were provoked by J. D. and would have been unintelligible without quotations from his letter, of which we gave the substance while we animadverted upon particular expressions in it that appeared to us exceptionable and offensive. Our office is sometimes burdensome, and would be intolerable, were we not relieved by the salutary *fiction*, which is not without a parallel in the *Law* of the British constitution, that THE EDITOR CAN DO NO WRONG. J. D. in his eagerness to defend the honour of the law of the land, violated one of the elementary laws of the republic of letters. We have not even guessed who J. D. is, and therefore our reflections cannot be considered as personal. We hope (to advert to a pleasantry of our unknown correspondent's) that it will be long before he will be qualified for a place in the *Obituary* of the Monthly Repository; but should we unfortunately be called upon to notice him in that department of our work, we shall be much more ready to display the virtues of his real character, than we have been to expose the indecorum of his assumed one. His second Letter makes us more desirous than ever his first of his correspondence; and if he will favour us with his communications on the review of Mr. Hutton, or any other subject, he shall see that we are not behind him in a readiness to forgive injuries, and that we can make any sacrifice of personal considerations for the instruction and entertainment of our readers.

Mr. Nightingale's Defence of his "Portraiture of Methodism," in answer to the Methodist Magazine, shall appear in our next; when we hope to be able to present our readers with a Review of his work. In the same number also will appear *Ignotus*, on "Popular Preaching," and Mr. Carpenter's Remarks on "Mr. Beisham's Strictures."

The "Lines" of Theophilus shall be inserted.

*** The reader will perceive, that we have adopted, in the present number, a new and enlarged plan of printing. Owing to a mis-calculation in the former sheets, we have found ourselves crowded in the latter part of the magazine: the *Obituary* and *Intelligence* are curtailed, and the *List of Books* and *Literary Notices* are wholly omitted. The deficiency will be remedied in the ensuing number, and care will be taken hereafter to avoid a similar error.